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POLISH ENCYCLOPÆDIC PUBLICATIONS. II

A BRIEF OUTLINE  
OF  
**POLISH HISTORY**



1919

IMPRIMERIE ATAR, CORRATERIE, 12 :: GENÈVE



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*The Polish cause has been the object of much misrepresentation by partisans of the three great empires which were interested in suppressing inconvenient truths. In consequence, the generous sympathy which has been so long extended to the Poles is often based rather on sentiment than on a knowledge of the facts. It is not possible to form a just idea of the territorial and other rights of nationalities, without having a clear, if general, notion of their history and development. Those who have not hitherto had time or opportunity to study the story of the Polish nation will find in this little volume a succinct exposition of the principal data, from which they may draw their own conclusions.*

*The brief sketch of Polish history which we here submit to the attention of the public forms part of a considerable work of reference, the Polish Encyclopædia, which we publish in French, and which is being translated into English. This survey has been written specially for us by Dr. Ladislas Konopczynski, professor at the University of Cracow. We owe the translation to the kindness of Professor Francis Benett, of Fribourg, to whom we tender our grateful thanks.*

*Fribourg, (Switzerland)*

*The Committee for the  
Polish Encyclopædic Publications.*

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# History of Poland to 1815

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# Independent Poland

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## I

### The first centuries

The country situated on the Warta, between the Oder and the Vistula, was the cradle of Poland. A thousand years ago this region, later called Great Poland, was still an immense forest land, though many spaces along the rivers had been cleared and were already thickly peopled. On the banks of the Warta lived the Polonians; further on, to the east, the Kuyavians (Kujawiacy), the Sieradzanians, the Lentchicians (Leczykanie); still more to the east, on the Vistula, the Mazurians; towards the south the Cracovians, the Vislanians and near these, to the west, the Silesians. All these tribes, though sunk in paganism, were already beginning to feel the influence of Christianity, whether of the Greek or of the Latin Church. All were more or less exposed to the incursions of the Germans, who, under the pretext of converting the heathens or of spreading their civilization, were making constant inroads on their eastern neighbours.

The population was grouped into clans of which the elders were the chieftains. All individuals, with the exception of a few serfs, enjoyed the same rights. At the outset there was no regularly constituted Knighthood. It

was only later that, under pressure of the German danger, the families formed tribes who, in time of war, chose chiefs or « dukes ». These were the first to create an armed force (militia, *druzyna*) which was eventually the means of transforming their temporary authority into permanent power. It was thus the chiefs encroached on the rights of the assemblies which had formerly controlled them. But this system was too weak and primitive to resist the powerful empire which the Germans had now organized and which enjoyed, moreover, the protection of the Church. Both concord and discipline were wanting to the Polish tribes, and in consequence, after the time of Charlemagne, the western Slav people passed, one by one, under the yoke of the Germanic Holy Roman Empire, or were exterminated. Finally, under Otho the Great, the situation of the Polonians had become critical.

After a series of pagan princes belonging to two successive dynasties, the Papiels and the Piasts, the first prince who brought Poland into the compass of western civilization was *Miecislav I* (960-992). By a memorable act he laid the foundations of the national greatness and set his people on the road to progress. Having espoused Dombrowka, the daughter of the king of Bohemia, he received baptism at the hands of the Tcheque priests (966). Henceforth all pretext for invasion was taken from the Germans, and the treasure-house of Latin civilization was laid open to the Polish nation. Thus did *Miecislav* free himself from the clutches of his nearest neighbours, the Germans. Following his example, his successors devoted themselves to the Christianization of their country and called in missionaries from Bohemia, like St Adalbert, or from Latin countries, such as the Benedictines, the Cistercians, etc., taking care however, to introduce none from hostile Germany. The founder of the state understood

his strength as well as his weakness. In order to resist the Saxon counts, the Tcheques and the Ruthenians, who attacked him, he recognized the suzerainty of Otho and was thus enabled to create the first permanent Polish military force, which was composed of 3000 knights. His son, *Boleslas the Valiant* (992-1025) marked out with his sword and defined the limits of the Kingdom of the Piasts. He won back Cracow (999) and Moravia (1004) from the Tcheques, the boroughs of Red Ruthenia (Przemysl and others) from the Ruthenians, (1018) he victoriously repulsed the armies of the emperor Henry II and maintained his hold on conquered Lusacia. At the same time he was consolidating his personal power by bringing the number of his troops up to 18.000 men; and finally, to consecrate the conquest of his independence, he caused himself to be crowned king in 1025.

After the death of Boleslas, however, a double danger menaced the work he had accomplished. His neighbours, Germans, Tcheques, Hungarians, Ruthenians, hastened to win back their lost provinces and to this external peril was added a pagan reaction at home.

The whole fabric of the state had to be reconstructed. *Casimir the Restorer* (1040-1058) succeeded in performing this heavy task, but on a less ample scale. He was not able to bring back under Polish domination the Slovak districts, Moravia, Lusacia, the towns of Red Ruthenia and the shores of the Baltic, but he united under Polish sway all the lands occupied by purely Polish tribes. The Knights, who now formed a special class, separate from the people, undertook the defence of the reconstituted State. Later on *Boleslas II, the Bold* (1058-1080) and *Boleslas III « Wrymouth »* (1102-1139), who were valiant warriors but inferior politicians, interposed with their troops in the affairs of their neighbours, and tried to im-

pose on Bohemia, Ruthenia and Hungary princes or kings of their own choosing, while at the same time they continued to hold the Germans in check. Boleslas III even conquered and christianized Slav Pomerania, with the towns of Szczecin (Stettin) and Wolin and the isle of Rugja (Rügen). But their inconsistent politics and the way they exhausted the resources of the country allowed the Holy Roman Empire to extend its rights in the Kingdom (1135) and prepared the way for its disintegration.

The division of Poland into four provinces, Silesia, Great Poland, Mazovia and Kuyavia with Sandomir, sanctioned by the testament of Boleslas III (1138), was not an innovation; it was a natural consequence of the conception of the state as the property of the sovereign and of the old Slav customs in the matter of inheritance. Boleslas III had tried to palliate the effects of his will by instituting the «seniorate», or right of primogeniture, with the title of grand duke, in favour of his eldest son, and the «principate», or superiority of the eldest over the others, this supremacy being attached to the fief of Cracow which had been given him over and above his share in the inheritance. It became, nevertheless, impossible to avoid the baleful consequence of this division, which was the source of civil wars, brought about the triumph of separatist tendencies, checked all efforts at unification on the part of the seniors, and helped to diminish the absolute power of the prince and augment that of the clergy and of the great feudatories, this last result being often aided by the papal court. In 1180, at the assembly of Leczyca, the clergy obtained for its members the highest privileges and immunities, whilst the secular lords, and after them, the whole order of Knighthood acquired numerous individual advantages. Poland then lost two provinces : Pomerania falling, after a brief period



of independence, into the hands of Germany (1308), and Silesia being subjected to the germanizing influence whilst under the elder branch of the house of Boleslas III, so that it was eventually annexed to Bohemia and passed with this country under the sway of Austria in 1526.

Meanwhile the emperors of the House of Hohenstaufen were interfering with the affairs of Poland, the Russians with those of Lithuania, and the Ruthenians were making incursions into the neighbouring Polish duchies. Finally, in 1241, the Tartar hordes invaded Little Poland, that is the lands of Cracow, Sandomir and Silesia. *Henry the Pious*, duke of Silesia, encountered them at the head of his knights and found his death in the *victory of Lignica* (Liegnitz) which saved the West from the invasion of the Barbarians. Their first onset, broken by the Poles and Hungarians, was never repeated with the same impetuosity (1259-1287). However the land was so completely laid waste that it became necessary to call in colonists from the Empire to cultivate it. It is true that Germany, which was then engaged in a struggle with the Papacy and was in an advanced state of lawlessness, was much less formidable than it had been. These colonists brought with them the customary law of Magdeburg, obtained the right to settle, created new towns or germanized the old ones by introducing municipal autonomy with all its organization, burgomasters, mayors, town-council, aldermen, courts of justice, guilds and village magistrates. This system was soon accepted by the local population and extended gradually east and west. In this manner, and upon a foreign basis, a middle class of burgesses was created in Poland by the side of the already existing and clearly defined castes of knightood, clergy and peasantry.

Przemyslas II, at first prince of Great Poland and later

crowned King (1295), attempted to unite once more the separate parts of the Kingdom, and this result was achieved by Ladislas Lokietek (the Short, 1306-1333), after a bloody struggle. Scarcely had this heterogeneous and incomplete union been realized (for Silesia and Mazovia were not included) when the State came in conflict with the Teutonic Order, that powerful German military organization. Unable to defend himself against the Prussians, Conrad of Mazovia had called to his assistance the knights of this mighty Order and established them on the lands of Chelmno (1226). The knights promptly vanquished the Prussians, germanized their country, seized Pomerania in 1308 notwithstanding the expostulations of Lokietek and began to tyrannize over Christian Poland as well as pagan Lithuania. A host of knights, drawn from all parts of Europe by this crusade against the infidels, came to lend their help to the Teutonic Order, whose implacable methods, far from winning the Lithuanians over to Christianity, rather alienated them from the Faith. Besides, the Teutonic Knights put every obstacle in the way of a good understanding between the Lithuanian princes and Rome, for such an alliance would have been a death-blow to their Order. Thus, this first war between Poland and the Teutonic Knights went on for seventeen long years, and even *Lokietek's victory at Plowce* in 1331 could not prevent the occupation of Kuyavia. His son and successor, Casimir III, the Great (1333-1370) was forced to yield up the lands of Dobrzyn and Michalow by the treaty of Kalisz. But this wise ruler profited by the peace he had so dearly bought to stanch the wounds which the war had inflicted on his people, to restore the nation to prosperity, to assert and enforce its claims to Red Ruthenia, and by an able foreign policy to place his name in the first rank of contemporary so-



vereigns. The economic restoration of the Kingdom, the *codes of Wislica and of Piotrków* (1347-1368) and the care he bestowed on the interests of the lower classes have earned for Casimir the surname of «the Great». After three victorious wars against the Lithuanians, Ruthenia was, in 1340, definitively attached to Poland and to western civilization. Casimir, as the old saying is, had found a Poland of wood and had left it of stone. He left it a rich and respected country and the ally of powerful Hungary. Moreover he had formed a group of eminent statesmen who, after the reign of his son-in-law, *Louis of Hungary* (1370-1392), succeeded in bringing about the union with Lithuania and diminishing the power of the Teutonic Order. When a husband had to be found for the young and beautiful Hedwige, the daughter of Louis and grand-niece of Casimir the Great, the Polish nobles succeeded in imposing their choice on her, and instead of William of Hapsburgh for whom she had a strong preference, she accepted Jagellon, duke of Lithuania.

## II

### Poland as a great power

#### 1. *General politics.*

Three events open up a new era in the history of eastern Europe : the *Treaty of Krewo* (1385), the baptism of Jagellon (Cracow, 1386) who now takes the name of *Ladislav II*, and his marriage with Hedwige, Queen of Poland. During the course of the Middle Ages the Lithuanian princes had many times vanquished the Mon-

gols and had withdrawn from their yoke a number of Ruthenian duchies. Thus, for instance, Mendog, in the XIIIth century, had wrested from them Polock, Gedymin (1315-1341), Turow, Pinsk and Kiew; his son Olgierd, the father of Jagellon, had taken Podolia and a part of Volhynia. However, this extension towards the East had been compensated by losses in the west under the pressure of the Teutonic Knights, whilst in the interior of Olgierd's vast realm the Lithuanian element, less numerous and less civilized, was beginning to mingle with the Ruthenian Orthodox element and to be lost in it. Now the triumph of the Greek Church and of Ruthenian preponderance in Lithuania was bound to bring about the fusion of western Ruthenia and of Lithuania with eastern Ruthenia, that is with the despotic government of Moscovy. In the 14th century many conflicts arose between Poland and the Grand Duchy; the union with Poland put an end to them by turning Lithuania's eyes to the west and doubling the strength of the Kingdom. After 1386 Poland's former rival and enemy became a sister-nation and collaborator. Lithuania was saved at once from the pseudo-Byzantine autocracy of the Tartars and from the Teutonic peril.

The Teutonic Knights, repulsed from Wilno (1390), were reduced to the defensive : Jagellon, with the help of Witold, Grand Duke of Lithuania, crushed them at Grunwald (1410) and wrested Samogitia from them. Under the reign of Casimir Jagellon (1447-1492), after a thirteen years' struggle (1453-1466), Poland recovered the district of Chelmno, eastern Pomerania, Malborg, the bishopric of Warmie and Gdansk (Dantzig) which henceforth became a free city, enclosed within the lands of the Kingdom. Moreover, by *the treaty of Torun* (Thorn) signed in 1446, the Grand-Master of the Order recognized the su-

zerainty of Poland, and in 1525, Albrecht of Hohenzollern, then Grand-master, after having embraced Protestantism, secularized his State (Eastern Prussia), paid homage to the king of Poland as Duke of Prussia, and at the same time renounced the emblems of the Order as well as all claims beyond his eastern frontier.

It was the *Polish-Lithuanian union* which had rendered this brilliant result possible. Every measure taken by the Lithuanians to strengthen its bonds had been perfectly free and dictated by the community of interests of the two parts of the monarchy. After Conrad Wallenrod's invasion had been victoriously repulsed (1391) and Witold had been beaten on the banks of the Worskla when he had attacked the Tartars (1399), the Lithuanians understood by the evidence of facts the value of the Polish alliance. In consequence they concluded, in 1401, the *Union of Wilno and Radom* by which they bound themselves never to abandon Poland, and to place Jagellon on the throne after the death of Witold; the Poles on their side, promised not to give a successor to Jagellon without a previous understanding with Lithuania. Soon after the battle of Grunwald, the Union of Horodlo (1413) conferred on the Catholic Lithuanian lords the privileges and titles of Polish nobility. Later on the Moscovite danger decided the two parties (1491) to sign a general agreement, by which the sovereign elected was to be at once king of Poland and grand-duke of Lithuania. Finally, during the war with Ivan the Terrible, the memorable Act of Lublin (1st July 1569) linked the two states indissolubly into one. The *Union of Lublin*, far from realizing the complete incorporation which the Poles aimed at, left on the contrary to Lithuania its own ministry, finances and army; nevertheless, it was not merely an external union through the person of the sovereign,

but a real union of the nations, based on a community of rights, a free and fraternal agreement. When *Sigismund Augustus* (1548-1572) formally established this union by his authority, he only did it in accordance with the programme adopted by the Lithuanians themselves, and to fulfil the wishes of the Lithuanian knights who aspired to Polish liberties.

As the union grew closer, the power of the Jagellons extended further. It soon reached beyond Smolensk (1404), it endeavoured to impose its protectorate on the republics of Pskow and Nowgorod (1426) and in the south it stretched to the confines of the Crimean Horde. Poland and the dynasty of the Jagellons exercised an attraction which is without parallel in history; as the Piasts became extinct, Mazovia came back little by little to its former allegiance: the lands of Rawa and Gostyn were annexed to Poland in 1462, that of Sochaczew in 1476, that of Plock, partly in 1495, and completely with Warsaw in 1529. On several occasions Bohemia offered its crown to the Jagellons (1428, 1438), and in 1471, the offer was actually accepted. Hungary, too asked the same favour, and two Ladislav, one the son, the other the grandson of Jagellon, ascended the throne of St Stephen in 1440 and 1490. Moldavia and Wallachia hastened after 1387 to render homage to the Polish sovereign, and finally the Prussian cities came forward voluntarily, in 1453, and placed themselves under the sceptre of Casimir Jagellon, whilst Livonia followed their example in 1561, and Courland acknowledged the suzerainty of Poland.

## 2. *Progress of Civilization.*

The progress of culture went hand in hand with this growth of political power in Poland. *Polish influence and*

*Catholicism*, without having recourse to any special processes of denationalization, gained the ascendant over Russo-orthodox influences and destroyed any veilities of separation which the latter tended to provoke.

The Polish element colonized and cultivated Podolia, Wolhynia and the district of Kiew and covered them with towns and villages. The *University of Cracow*, founded in 1364 by Casimir the Great, restored and endowed by Queen Hedwige (1400), the oldest in central Europe after that of Prague (1348), became a centre of scholastic studies, gathered together or formed a host of theologians and jurists who were to speak with authority in the oecumenical Councils of Constance and Bâle before the masters of Catholic thought. It created a centre of light whose rays were to illumine later the *Academy of Wilno* (1579), whose teaching became so deservedly famous, that of Zamosc (1593), that of Lwow (1661) and even the non-Catholic Academy of Kiew-Mohilef (17th cent.). In the 15th and 16th centuries Polish science was nowise inferior to that of the West, whether in theology and jurisprudence (Paul Wlodkiewicz, John Elgot, Archbishop John Laski), or in the exact sciences. And when it came in touch with humanism it gave the world the astronomer Copernicus (1543) and the political writer, Modrzewski (*De Republica Emendanda* 1551). It felt, like the rest of Europe, the shock and the impulsion of the Hussite movement, received into its bosom the « novelties » of Augsburg and of Geneva, and helped during the Reformation to the constituting of foreign national churches (John Laski vel a Lasco, 1560), and, although Poland remained in great majority faithful to Catholicism, yet it gave birth to the sect of Polish Arians, perhaps the most advanced in Europe in claiming the right of free inquiry. Finally in the domain of *letters*,



the prose of Rey and Gornicki, the poetry of Kochanowski and of Sarbiewski, the eloquence of Peter Skarga, hold an honourable rank.

On the other hand, during this « golden century » of the three Sigismunds (*Sigismund the Old*, 1506-1548, *Sigismund II Augustus*, 1548-1572, *Sigismund III*, 1587-1632), Polish arms covered themselves with glory and contributed no less than literature to the greatness of the fatherland. The Hetmans, John Tarnowski, the victor of the Moldavians at Obertyn in 1531, and Constantine Ostrogski, the conqueror of the Moscovites at Orsza in 1514, created the type of the Polish light hussar. King *Stephen Bathory* (1576-1586), the conqueror of Livonia, formed a school of excellent officers who perfected the cavalry and led it to glorious victories. John Zamoyski, at the head of his squadrons, beat the Austrians at Byczyna (1588), John-Charles Chodkiewicz vanquished the Swedes at Kirchholm (1605), Stanislas Zółkiewski the Moscovites at Kluszyn (1610), Stanislas Koniecpolski the Tartars at Sasowy Róg (1633) and King Ladislas IV the Moscovites at Smolensk (1633).

### 3. *Constitution, political rights. Social condition.*

Nations hastened to put themselves under the sceptre of the Jagellons. Wherever the « bulawa » (staff of office) of the hetmans was the sign of power, every citizen felt himself secure, each section of the community saw its rights respected, the whole people enjoyed *constitutional government*, every individual could freely develop his natural capacities and his mind. Within the Polish Commonwealth, the Poles of the different provinces lived side by side with the most various nationalities, Lithuanians, Ruthenians, Germans, Prussians, Livonians,

Courlanders, Jews, Tartars, Armenians, Wallachians, and no one tried to change the nationality of another. As long as the Ruthenian tongue was that of the politically active class, that is, of the nobility, it remained the official language of Lithuania. Until 1632 all *religions* were exercised with equal freedom, and later, the dissidents (with the exception of the Arians, banished in 1658) met with complete toleration, enjoying rights more extensive than those they themselves granted, on the principle of reciprocity, in European countries where they were in the majority. Poland was a *refuge* for the victims of all religious persecutions, of every form of tyranny. Each ethnic group, in so far as its social standing gave it public rights, was selfgoverning and followed its own usages. The Germans in the towns were governed by German law, the Jews by Jewish law, the Armenians by Armenian law, and so on. It was in this fraternal agreement of peoples freely united that properly consisted what came to be called the *Jagellonian system*. Nowhere else in Western Europe were such a large proportion of the citizens allowed to take part in public life, nowhere else did the private citizen enjoy so long and to such an extent the free disposal of his own person as in Poland, nowhere else was he called upon to intervene in supreme matters of state. Following the lead of England, Aragon and Hungary, the Polish nobles first freed themselves from extraordinary contributions and from unpaid military service abroad (Privilege of Kassa (Koszyce), (1374), then they acquired the inviolability of their estates (*nemini bona confiscabimus*, *privilege of Czerwinsk*, 1442), of their persons (*neminem captivabimus*, *privilege of Cracow*, 1433), the right of election to territorial tribunals, the right of taking part in the creation and administration of new territorial institutions (*order of Nieszawa*, 1454), exemption from

customsdues (1496), real and decisive participation in the legislative power (*Statute of Radom*, «*Nihil novi statuemus*», 1505). This last right at first extended only to the conservative party or nobility, but in 1578 it was extended to the election of deputies to the supreme Court of Justice. There was at first no written code of law, as it was the authority of precedents which constituted the autonomy of provincial assemblies. These were the territorial «*dietines*», or parliaments, and the Palatinate dietines, from the 14th century onward, the provincial dietines, a little later, in Great and Little Poland, in Ruthenia and Lithuania. Later still the assembly of delegates from the various provincial dietines constituted the *Great Diet* (1493) in which sat the *three estates*, that is the King, the appointed members of the senate (bishops, palatines, castellans and state ministers) and the *elected* Chamber of deputies. The right of electing the King, already existing in the time of the Jagellons, but rarely exercised, except in favour of the princes of that dynasty, became absolutely free at the death of Sigismund Augustus, and henceforth foreigners and natives, even those of the simple rank of gentlemen, could become candidates to the throne. After the first election which followed on the extinction of the House of the Jagellon, that of *Henry of Valois* (1573), the relations between the crown and the nation were regulated by the *pacta conventa* which the nation could break, if they were violated by the King.

This excessive liberty was not without peril for the nobility, as well as for the other classes of the people.

Before reaching the stage of parliamentary government, Polish society, like nearly all those of western Europe, was divided into *four estates* or orders: the clergy, the nobility, the burgesses and the people, to say nothing of the Jews, who formed, as it were, a nation



within a nation. There was no special class of magnates, for the nobility had not allowed the formation of a class of great lords above itself, like the peers of England, the magnates of Hungary, the ricos hombres of Spain, and until the last days of the Republic, it admitted no foreign title of duke, count or baron. Down to the middle of the 15th century there was a certain balance between the social orders which was secured by the king, whose duty it was to watch over the rights and privileges of each order. But as soon as the nobility had attained its principal political rights, its diets and dietines, it began to take advantage of its position to oppress the burgesses and the people. In consequence the lower classes would have lost many of their rights, and the *royal power* would have been hopelessly enfeebled and unable to resist the encroachments of the great lords, had it not had the support of western monarchs, who helped the king to dominate his great feudatories.

Under the Jagellons the *cities* reached a high degree of prosperity and entered on the path of democratic administration by introducing representatives of the people by the side of those of landed property. Nevertheless the taking of Kilia and Belgrade (in Bessarabia) by the Turks in 1481, cut Poland off from the Black Sea, thus striking a severe blow at the commerce of transit, which was an important factor in the wealth of the citizen class. The descendants of the German settlers, whether by ignorance of Polish political customs or by remissness at the time of the creation of the Diet, allowed themselves for the most part to be deprived, without a struggle, of the right of representation therein. As a matter of fact, only a few towns retained the right of sending deputies to the Diet, even during the interregna. Besides, each city was only anxious about its own local interests and

looked upon other towns merely as rivals. It was satisfied with obtaining commercial advantages over other marts and cared nothing about securing them over the nobility. But the nobles inaugurated a selfish customs policy, from the very second Diet (1496). The burden of customs duties was laid on the shoulders of the other classes, and the idea that inspired the tariff was purely fiscal, instead of being protectionist. The consequence was that foreign goods came pouring in, *ruining Polish industries* without even enriching trade. In 1565, in obedience to erroneous commercial ideas, the Diet forbade the citizens to export goods abroad, hoping thus to force foreign tradesmen to come to Poland and bring in bullion. The nobility did not succeed in ruining the guilds, but, in the first years of the 16th century, it laid heavy taxes on goods in the towns and did incalculable injury to trade. Later on, it founded in the outskirts of the towns suburbs which were destined to compete with the towns, and bought up within the cities themselves buildings for emporia to which it gave the privilege of exterritoriality (*jurydyki*), thus taking them out of the jurisdiction of the municipalities. The nobility monopolized the *foreign grain commerce* on the Vistula, and in order to lower the social standing of the burgesses, it subjected them to sumptuary laws, forbade them to acquire land and forbade the nobility to exercise a trade. In the 17th century the « private » cities lost their autonomy.

The peasant's lot was sadder still. When it was shown that mercenary armies were superior to popular levies, the military nobility became landholders and tried to obtain the largest income possible from their lands. Then, by buying up the posts, the nobles deprived the peasants of their only organ of autonomy, the *soltys* or bailiff, imposed on them its own exclusive jurisdiction and began

to exact from them statute labour instead of, or even in addition to, rent. The *statutes of Torun and of Bydgoszcz* (Bromberg) established in 1520 as the basis of this forced labour one day a week per « lan » (about 45 acres), but only in those places where no higher scale existed. Later on, these statutes were interpreted quite arbitrarily, and the 18th century statute labour reached as much as eight days per « lan », on an average, the peasant's right of journeying was restricted, and such as sheltered a fugitive or did not bring him back to his lord were severely punished. Agriculture, still in a very primitive state, could not furnish the peasants with the means to redeem their liabilities to forced labour. The landlord had conferred on himself the monopoly of the distillation and sale of spirits, which gave rise to many abuses, and that of grinding the corn raised by his villeins, who were moreover subjected to many prestations in kind. Thus the villager, once free and even enjoying a certain autonomy, was attached to the glebe and became a needy and hard pressed labourer, almost a serf, while nominally retaining his rights, his legal capacity and even certain rights to the soil.

Access to the higher ecclesiastical dignities, cathedral and collegial chapters and abbeys was rendered difficult and finally forbidden to peasants and the middle classes. Then the clergy which was no longer recruited among the lower orders made common cause with the nobility and adopted their views, though it sometimes fell foul of the landlords in the question of tithes. Once even, under Sigismund Augustus, the clergy violently opposed that prince's project of a national church. Finally the social action of the Jews consisted in monopolizing a considerable part of the home trade, to the detriment of the middle class, and in making usurious loans to the peasants.

In reality the nobility considered themselves as alone forming the nation, and the Polish parliament became the instrument and privilege of a single class. This political monopoly contained the germ of numberless evils. The dominant caste having no competition to fear began to sink into a selfish conservatism; and, what is worse, as it had no need of solidarity against a common enemy, it was unable to cope with the decentralizing tendencies within its own order which had their roots in the particularizing traditions of the palatinates of the 13th century. These traditions prevailed over sound reasons of State. The instructions relative to the dietines began to impose on deputies a definite and detailed programme and to forbid them all initiative, so that they were helpless before the dissensions that arose among them. In consequence, the Polish parliamentary system, deprived of a strong and independent executive, never reached the principle of majority rule, and on the contrary adopted that of unanimity, which is the negation of all progress. The application of this principle passed from the Diet to the dietines. The unanimity required in the Diet gave rise, whenever personal interests were at variance, to the tactics of obstruction, which consisted in the *interdiction* of any adverse motion: each deputy possessed the « *liberum veto* » and could stop a discussion and cause the dissolution of the assembly. The suspension of the Diet was followed by that of the dietines. In exceptional cases, when the affairs under consideration were too serious to be dismissed and yet it was hopeless to expect the adhesion of all the deputies, recourse was had to an old mediaeval usage of forming leagues (« *confederations* ») There were many *leagues* in existence, particular or general, civil or military, patriotic-loyalist (like that of Tyszowce against the Swedes in 1655), or loyalist in name

only as regards « his Majesty », but in reality directed against the Court (as for example, that of Szczebrzeszyn, 1672). But there were also leagues which had a rebellious character, such as the *Rebellion of Lwow* (1537), that of Zebrzydowski (1606-1607), that of Lubomirski (1665-1666). Each league, of a more or less revolutionary character, exercised the supreme executive power by means of its organs and put rigorously into practice the system of majority rule, crushing down all opposition without pity.

This system of government, so defective if viewed from a modern standpoint, succeeded, nevertheless, in securing the strength and safety of the State during several centuries; as long, in fact, as good sense and patriotism directed the action of free men towards the public good. The occasional manifestations of anarchy seemed insignificant compared with the danger of falling under the yoke of such an absolutism as reigned in the XVIIth century under the pompous title of « King by the grace of God », over Spain, France, Germany, Bohemia, Sweden, Hungary, in a word, over all Western Europe. The French monarchy, with its servile court, with its contention between the classes, with its proud and overrated nobility, its Bastille and its « lettres de cachet »; the backward condition of Spain; Germany torn to pieces and ruined by a hungry pack of petty tyrants; all these presented a spectacle that was far from comforting, even to the most superficial thinker. England even, at the epoch of the civil wars, gave no inkling of the social state which should hold the mean between the extremes of despotism and anarchy. It is not surprising, therefore, that in Poland the lightest breach of private rights, such as the suppression of the liberum veto or of free election, seemed a first step on the slippery downward slope that leads to the loss of all personal liberty. If we add to these consi-



derations the decline of instruction during the period of Catholic reaction (after Sigismund III), the growth of religious fanaticism under the influence of the Jesuits, and finally the evil influence of the debates in the diets and dietines, where the impossibility of convincing everybody made people have recourse to threats and cajolery in order to obtain their ends, we shall easily understand how political ideas rapidly degenerated in Poland after the epoch of the Sigismunds.

#### 4. *Foreign Relations.*

The effects of this constant weakening of the vital strength of the nation made themselves felt early in the foreign relations of the State. From the time of the Sigismunds the excessive expansion of Poland in the East, and the exaggerated zeal with which Poland was made to play the part of pioneer of Catholicism and of Latin ideas in Ruthenia were compromising its situation in the West. The first Hohenzollerns were able to consolidate their power on the Baltic, the Hapsburgs made themselves masters of Bohemia and Hungary after the defeat and death of Louis Jagellon at the battle of Mohacs 1526. And all this did not prevent the momentary loss of Smolensk (1513-1611) and of Polock (1562-1579). Poland was quite lacking in natural frontiers to the east : beyond the Dnieper, Muscovy had been constantly developing and formed a perpetual menace for Lithuania and a centre of attraction for the Ruthenians, although the latter nation was nominally severed from Orthodoxy and attached to Rome by the religious union of Brzesc (1595).

After the extinction of the house of Rurik (1598), when usurpers reigned in Muscovy, circumstances were very favourable for the introduction of Polish liberal influences

and consequently for drawing closer the bond between Poles and Muscovites. At the instigation of the Hetman Zolkiewski, the boyars had decided to offer the throne to Ladislas, the son of Sigismund II. But the latter, owing to his Jesuit fanaticism, allowed this unique opportunity to escape him. Half a century later, under the redoubtable pressure of the Muscovites, Kiew and Smolensk had to be abandoned by the *Treaty of Andruszow* (1667), and they were lost for ever as was soon confirmed by the *Perpetual peace of Grzymultowski* (1686). Sigismund Waza, in order to assert his rights to the crown of Sweden, embroiled Poland without necessity with its northern neighbour. The Swedes occupied Esthonia and Livonia. Another, and a nearer, neighbour, Frederick William of Brandenburg, known by the name of the Grand Elector, profited by these quarrels to free himself from the suzerainty of Poland (*Peace of Welawa-Bydgoszcz, Wehlau-Bromberg*, 1657).

The situation was hardly better in the south. The most terrible enemy, the Musulman, against whom king Ladislas II (1434-1444) had battled at the cost of his life for the defence of Europe, after having subjugated Wallachia and Moldavia (16th century), was troubling Ruthenia and had temporarily seized Podolia (1672-1699). Poland's enemies contrived to combine their efforts, to relieve one another, to create diversions in one another's favour and even sometimes to find parties in the Republic ready to connive at their efforts, whilst Poland, on the contrary, deprived of capable diplomacy and without regular ministries, was incapable of profiting by the 30 years'war, and continued to oppose to the enemy the old splendid and impetuous cavalry unsupported by either good infantry or good artillery. Its valiant efforts succeeded in repressing a few revolts of the

Cossacks, and resisting the shock of the immense Ottoman forces at the battles of Chocim (1621) and Paniowce (1633). Great leaders, like George Lubomirski and Stephen Czarniecki, under John Casimir (1648-1668) saved Poland from shipwreck when Cossacks, Muscovites, Swedes, Transsylvanians, Brandenburgers, singly or together, threw themselves on the country from every quarter. The greatest of these generals was undoubtedly John Sobieski who covered himself with glory by beating the Turks at *Podhajce* (1668) and Chocim 1673, and saving Vienna and Christendom in 1683. But Polish politics were not on a par with its warlike exploits. Statesmen did not succeed in attaching to Poland the Ruthenian people, nor in lightening the burdens that weighed on the Cossacks, stirring them to constant rebellion. The most terrible of these revolts, that of Bohdan Chmielnicki (1648) ended in the *loss of half Ukrania*, which passed into the hands of the Muscovites (1654), then for a time under the protectorate of Turkey (1667) to become definitively Russian in 1676.

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### III

## Decadence of Poland

### 1. *Recrudescence of Anarchy.*

Anarchy was now unchecked. Marie Louise Gonzaga, the wife of *John Casimir*, at the instigation of Louis XIV, tactlessly endeavoured to combat it by bribery, with the object of placing a French prince on the throne of Poland. She only succeeded in provoking a redoubtable conflict between the royal power and liberty. The reign of *Michael*



*Wisniowiecki* (1669-1673) witnessed the triumph of the demagogues. But in its turn, the nobility allowed itself to be dominated by the houses of Potocki, Lubomirski, Wisniowiecki, Radziwill, Pac, Sapieha. From the middle of the XVIIth century, the magnates, whose local interests were often in mutual opposition, were all-powerful in the dietines and in the courts of justice; the higher posts, that were held for life, such as those of hetman, chancellor, high-treasurer, marshal, were made subservient to their ambitions.

In such surroundings, even the wisest and bravest king, even *John III Sobieski* (1674-1696), could not arrest the downward movement. At the Diet of 1661, John Casimir had already unmasked the annexionist designs of Muscovy, of Brandenburg and of the House of Hapsburgh. John Sobieski had endeavoured betimes to foil the attempts of his three neighbours by allying himself with Louis XIV and the Swedes to conquer eastern Prussia. But he was not supported by the nation. It would no longer hear (1678) of any other war than a new crusade with Austria against Turkey. Nevertheless the next interregnum (1696-1697) proved the wisdom of John III's projects: the House of Hapsburgh, seconded by Brandenburg and the czar, Peter I, was so successful in its diplomatic intrigues as to impose as king on Poland the elector of Saxony, Frederick Augustus, who was disapproved of by the majority of the Diet, and who proved a detestable sovereign. In a few more decades the two black imperial eagles, favoured by the passive attitude of the royal eagle of Prussia, were destined to drive out of Poland the legitimately elected king, Stanislas Leszczynski (1733-1734). And one generation later, Russia and Prussia, with the tacit approval of Austria, were to instal by force on the throne of Poland their creature Poniatowski (1764), in order to extort from

him, ten years later, his consent to the triple partition. The gravest forebodings filled the minds of the wisest during these times. Agonizing warnings resounded through the literature of this period of decadence. Already at the beginning of the 18th century, statesmen had advocated a union with the natural allies of Poland, France, Sweden and Turkey. But few were those who understood that no alliance could supply the place of a radical internal reform. To submit to a despotic government was a thing which the Polish nation could not do without renouncing all its deepest moral traditions; the contemporaries of Louis XIV, of Milton and Hobbes, could not believe in the possibility of a compromise between the royal prerogatives and the rights of the people, until the theories of Locke and the practice of England (though this was by no means edifying at the time of Walpole) had opened the eyes of the world. Even Karwicki, the most logical of the Polish writers of the period, did not believe such a thing possible. (*De ordinanda Republica*, 1708.)

Moreover, the vaunted system of European monarchy presented itself to the Poles in a most odious light in the person of *Augustus II of Saxony* (1696-1733), a selfish German tyrant who never understood the spirit of Polish institutions and admitted in his heart no other liberty but his own, no other law than his own will and pleasure. The king, in order to realize his dynastic ambitions, involved the Republic in an alliance with Russia against Sweden, an alliance which was contrary to its own interests, let loose the disastrous war of the North (1700-1721) which until 1713 was waged on Polish territory, was the occasion of the prodigious growth of Russian power under Peter the Great and the excuse for his dangerous intervention in the affairs of Poland (1716-1717), and, what was worse still, allowed him during his whole reign

to intrigue with his neighbours for the partition of Poland on the one condition, that some morsels of its territory should fall into the despotic hands of his son and successor. The reduction of the Polish army to 24.000 men, of which the dragoons and foot-soldiers were under the orders of foreign officers, was equivalent to disarming the Republic. (Treaty of Warsaw 1716, under the pressure of the Russian forces.) On the other hand, the next sovereign, *Augustus III* (1733-1763), a narrow-minded and thoughtless man, king by the grace of Russia and Austria, proved incapable of profiting by the last occasion to effect some amelioration in the government without provoking violent opposition on the part of his neighbours.

## 2. *Struggle against the anarchy fomented by foreigners.*

Far from using their exalted position to set a good example, the Kings of the House of Saxony only encouraged the corruption of morals and the love of idleness. «When Augustus had drunk, all Poland was fuddled.» It was not only the political existence of Poland, but its whole civilization which was at stake. Without the slightest encouragement from the Augustuses, enlightened statesmen, like the chancellor Andrew Zaluski, Stanislas Poniatowski, the Elder, the two Czartoryskis, political writers like king Stanislas Leszczynski and Stanislas Konarski elaborated a *Scheme of Reform*. Starting from the increase and reorganization of the army, and the reform of the administration by introducing the *system of colleges*, these reforms aimed finally at social reconstitution (reinstating cities in their rights, emancipating the peasantry), and constitutional reform, based especially on regenerating the Diet and the succession to the throne.

The nation, as a whole, in so far at least as it was not

under the sway of political agitators or foreign influences, understood the need for improving the military organization of the Republic, and with the advance of instruction (educational reform of Konarski, ca. 1740) the people inclined more and more to fundamental changes. What was wanting to Polish patriotism in the 18th century was not so much the courage to cope with a supposed moral disease as right understanding of its own interests. If strength of character was sometimes wanting, and breadth of view generally inexistent, there was at least no real degeneracy in the race. The corruption of the all powerful magnates, of which so much has been made, was not worse than what disgraced all the European courts throughout the 18th century. The lesser nobility were not more easily bribed than the corresponding class in England at the elections in the time of Walpole, or in Sweden at the period of the « hats and bonnets ». The private life of the great Lords was neither better nor worse than in the west; the morals of the nobility were not below the average of Europe. The peasant, exempt from heavy taxes, and from obligatory military service, was as well off as in France, much better than in Russia, or even Prussia, as was proved by the constant emigration of Russian and Prussian peasants into Poland.

*Consequently the Polish nation was capable of rising again by its own unaided strength, and that was precisely the reason why the other powers united all their efforts to prevent it. Russia and Prussia, by a series of treaties (1720-1726, 1730, 1740, 1743, 1762, 1764) swore to maintain the state of anarchy in Poland.*

There was, however, a difference between the aims of Russia and those of Prussia : whilst the latter wanted immediately to annex Eastern Prussia, Warmia, Gdansk (Dantzig) and even, if possible, Courland, as well as a

part of Great Poland, Russia, from the time of Peter the Great, desired, under the false pretext of defending the Republic, to take it under its protection, in order eventually to bring it under its complete domination. It was with this object that Peter imposed his mediation in the negotiations between the confederates of Tarnogród and Augustus II (1716), and, later, Russian statesmen, such as Bestuzew, Worontzow, Panin, profited by this mediation to seize upon the administration of Polish affairs.

Thus, after the death of Augustus III (1764), *Stanislas Augustus Poniatowski* was thrust into the position of King of Poland. He was the candidate of Petersburg and Berlin, the son of an enlightened nobleman, nephew to the princes Czartoryski and a former lover of Catherine II. The Czartoryskis had him proclaimed King, hoping to govern in his name and to make him the instrument of their intended reforms. Catherine had furnished the armed force and the funds necessary to overcome all opposition to his election, in order to govern Poland in the interests of Russia. Stanislas Augustus, though weak and without much dignity, was nevertheless animated with a great zeal for reform, and generally took the part of the Czartoryskis against Russia. Soon the current of reform became so strong that the Russian envoy, Repnin, acting in concert with his Prussian colleague, went so far as to threaten the Diet with declaration of war (1766) in case they adopted the principle of government by majority of votes. Russia went further and encouraged the Potockis, the Radziwills and the Mniszechs, the adversaries of the Czartoryskis, to found a blundering and reactionary confederacy; and finally, in order to deprive the king and his uncles of the support of the nation, Catherine raised the question of the equality of rights for dissidents and schismatics.



By «dissidents» were meant protestants and calvinists; the schismatics were the members of the Greek Church who had not adhered to the Union of Brzesc (1595). The dissidents had acted with a common accord and sought the protection of foreign powers. It was only when their intrigues with Sweden, under John Casimir and Augustus II, were discovered, that the traditional tolerance of the Polish constitution began to abate. The Diet of 1717 interdicted throughout Poland the building or restoration of new dissident churches. Later, in 1733 and 1736, the dissidents were forbidden to hold public functions in the parliament, courts of justice, senate and so on. Nevertheless, they enjoyed in Poland a degree of freedom which Catholics in England or Denmark might have envied. The schismatics, who belonged to the peasant class and were, consequently, deprived of all political rights, were in a less favoured position.

In 1767, at the instigation of Russia and the protestant courts (Prussia, England, Denmark and Sweden), the *dissidents* formed a league. The malcontents among the Catholics imitated them (at Radom) in the hope that Russia would dethrone Poniatowski. But Repnin, who had introduced into disarmed Poland a force of 40.000 men, gave a new turn to events. He next forced the king to summon an extraordinary session of the Diet (Warsaw 1767-1768) and finally he had bishop Soltyk and several other senators and deputies seized and transported to Russia (Kaluga). The Diet was terrorized and voted all that the Russian ambassador dictated, equality of rights for the dissidents (Repnin excepted the Uniates from this measure), and the so-called «*Treaty of Warsaw*», according to which all the well known causes of anarchy, such as the «liberum veto», the election of the King, the

rights of nobles over peasants (except in criminal justice) were maintained as « fundamental rights » and guaranteed by Russia.

### 3. *The First Partition.*

The parties of opposition saw the error they had committed at Radom, and, in order to preserve the independence of the country, formed the « *League of Bar* » (Feb. 29, 1768). Turkey supported their initiative by declaring war on Russia; France and Saxony lent their financial assistance and diplomatic action. On the ill-judged advice of Dumouriez, the French envoy, and under pressure of the magnates who had formerly been the authors of the Radom conference, the general council of the confederation proclaimed the throne vacant (1770). By this act the cooperation of the king with the leaguers was rendered impossible; an attempt to seize the person of Stanislas Augustus (1771) discredited the leaders of the movement in the eyes of Europe.

However, Russia alone could not vanquish at once the Turks and the confederates, and she could not appease Poland without making some concessions in the matter of constitutional reform, the independence of the state and the position of the dissidents; and these concessions might have afforded the Czartoryskis an occasion to resume the power and to tranquillize the minds of the excited people. Austria, having allied herself to Turkey, was threatening to intervene with her army. In the presence of such difficulties, Catherine was obliged to give up her hope of exclusive domination in Poland, but, rather than recognize the independence of Poland and authorize the reforms which would have followed on such an action, she preferred to agree to the partition proposed by Frederick the Great. Austria, then, whom Joseph II

was urging on to a policy of aggrandizement, abandoned her intended war with Russia and Prussia, and joined with Frederick and Catherine in their plan of enriching themselves with the spoils of the Republic.

The forces of the confederates were crushed by the Russians and Prussians (1772); the armies of the three co-partitioning powers occupied the coveted territories, and on the 5th of August 1772, a treaty was signed at St. Petersburg between the three governments. Russia and Austria, not content with what was allotted to them, annexed yet other districts. According to the terms of the treaty, Russia was to receive the palatinates of Witebsk and Mscislaw, a part of those of Polock and Minsk, as well as the remainder of Polish Livonia (1,230,000 inhabitants and 93,000 sq. Kilometers); Prussia was to get the palatinate of Pomerania (with the exception of Gdansk) those of Malborg, Chelmno (without Torun), Warmia with a fragment of Great Poland, up to the Notec (Netze) (36,000 sq. kilom., and more than 500,000 inhabitants); Austria took the Ruthenian palatinate of Russia, a part of those of Cracow, of Sandomir, of Belz and of Podolia (70,000 sq. kilom. and 2,126,000 inhabitants). The Republic thus lost more than a quarter of its territory, which at that time was 730,000 sq. kilom., and more than a third of its population (11,500,000 souls).

In September 1773, the new *Confederation of Warsaw*, which disposed at the time of the majority of votes in the Diet, notwithstanding the protest of Thaddeus Rejtan and his friends, ratified the Partition by giving it the semblance of a voluntary cession made by the Republic to Austria, Russia and Prussia. In this case the fear of a new partition, should any opposition be made, was an even stronger motive than the influence of foreign gold or that of the unworthy marshal Poninski. It was under



the influence of the same fear that the Diet voted a new *constitution* : the king lost even the shadow of his former power which became now vested in a permanent Council; moreover, the election to the throne was rendered more difficult by the exclusion of foreign candidates as well as of the descendants of the late king; the fundamental rights of 1768 were confirmed, not excluding the *liberum veto*.

#### 4. *The Constitution of May 3rd 1791.*

Nevertheless Poland was able to profit by this reform, although it was far from answering to the highest Polish political ideal of the times and seemed to have for its object to deprive the State of all influence abroad. *The Permanent Council*, composed of 30 members, senators and deputies under the presidency of the king, and of five departments (foreign affairs, war, treasury, police, justice), seized upon the administration and put down the arbitrary rule of the great lords. King Stanislas, though deprived of all powers, even that of appointing to government posts, gave a strong impetus to reform. A number of improvements were introduced into the finances, the army, the police. At the same time the Education Commission (organized in 1773), and which is rightly regarded as the first Board of Education in Europe, reformed the University of Cracow, covered the land with secondary and primary schools accessible to all, whilst the « Society for elementary Text-books » furnished them with excellent school manuals. In a few years the country opened a splendid *network of roads*, developed its industries in spite of the difficulties created by Prussia, and put *trade on a sound basis*. Thanks especially to the king's enlightened patronage, there was a sort of *revival of literature* (Krasinski, Trembecki) and of *science* (the

historian Naruszewicz). Enlightened publicists grouped themselves round Staszyc and Kollataj, animated by the true democratic spirit and an ardent desire to strengthen the government in order to save their country.

When, after the death of Frederick the Great, Russia allied with Austria attempted to solve the Oriental Question and declared war on Turkey, the Republic thought that it might now break the chains with which the three hostile Powers had loaded her. The *Four Years' Diet* (1788-1792) tried to profit by the antagonism which momentarily separated Prussia from the two empires. Notwithstanding the efforts of Stanislas Augustus, who preferred the Russian alliance, the leaders of the majority in the parliament (Kollataj, Potocki and Malachowski, Marshal of the Diet) signed a defensive and offensive treaty with Frederick William II (1790). Gdansk and Torun were to be ceded to Prussia on the condition that it lent its aid for the recovery of Galicia by Poland. As a matter of fact, Prussia did not fight with Austria, and Galicia was not reconquered. However the Diet, confiding in the promised assistance and counting on the support of England, Turkey and Sweden, set aside the fundamental rights introduced by Repnin, and, with the full consent of the king, voted the series of radical reforms which are contained in the *Constitution of May 3rd 1791* and in some complementary laws. The liberum veto and the «imperative mandates» (limited initiative) of the dietines were suspended; the succession to the throne was made hereditary in the person of the Infanta of Saxony (great grand-daughter of king Augustus III); the Diet was proclaimed to be permanent, which put an end to intermittent sessions; a committee of five ministers replaced the Permanent Council; the right to appoint to public offices was restored to the king and

he became also the commander-in-chief of the army; the royal cities received an autonomous municipal organization and the right of sending deputies to the Diet; the peasants were placed under the protection of the law. Unfortunately the raising and equipping of an army of 100,000 men, which had been voted in 1788, remained a dead letter.

### 5. *Second and Third Partition.*

The reform seemed to certain great lords, who were traitors to their country, to be a criminal attempt against their freedom. Xavier Branicki, Felix Potocki and Severin Rzewuski took refuge with Catherine II and asked her help to overturn the constitution of the 3rd of May. The Empress judged that, in order to cancel this reform and punish its authors, a new partition was necessary. And under the attraction of this new Russian proposal, *the ally of the Republic, Frederick William, breaking his solemn pledge, not only failed to help Poland in her need, but joined with Russia against her.* In 1792 the armies of Catherine broke the valiant resistance of the Polish generals, Joseph Poniatowski, Thaddeus Kosciuszko and Zajaczek, on the banks of the Bug. Following in the track of the invader, the rebellious factions which had leagued themselves together at Targowica, entered the country and began to undo the work of the great Diet. The king thought that by joining with this league he would succeed in maintaining and safeguarding a few of the reforms, as he had done by entering into the Radom confederacy. This was a fatal mistake. The Prussians invaded Great Poland which Russia had abandoned to them (1793) and Catherine, at the *diet of Grodno*, ordered the leaguers of Targowica to ratify a second Partition of Poland between Russia and Prussia. The Diet, sur-

rounded with Russian bayonets and cannons (2nd and 3rd of September 1793) gave its consent by an impressive silence to the choice of a delegation to treat with Prussia «the mute Diet». It was thus that it confirmed the two treaties with the despoilers. This time Russia annexed Ukrainia and half of Lithuania (250.000 sq. kilom. and 3.100 000 inhabitants); Prussia took Torun, Gdansk and Great Poland (58.370 sq. kilom. and 1.100.000 inhabitants). Austria took no share in the partition.

The Diet of Grodno restored the Permanent Council and disbanded a great part of the army. But its decisions were not completely executed; on the one hand the wish to ruin Poland definitively had prevailed at St. Petersburg, on the other, the nation had made up its mind for a desperate struggle. General Madalinski refused to disarm his troops and, on March 24, 1794, on the great square of Cracow, Thaddeus Kosciuszko, created general-in-chief by the «émigrés» swore to remain faithful to the nation and to fight against the enemies of his country. The troops took the same oath. Himself a partisan of the new republican ideas and one of the heroes of American independence, he tried to breathe his spirit into the Polish nation and to communicate to all his enthusiasm in this supreme struggle. At the head of the celebrated scythe-armed peasants he *vanquished the Russians at Raclawice* (14th April). By an edict dated from *Polaniec*, Kosciuszko proclaimed the individual liberty of the peasants, on the condition they paid their debts and taxes before leaving their former lords; he also reduced statute labour. He succeeded in gathering together an army of 70.000 men. But this force, insufficiently supplied with ammunition, was unable to cope with the three banded enemies, for the king of Prussia had hastened to join the Russians against the insurgents,

and Austria had invaded the neighbouring territory of Galicia. Not a single power came to help Poland in this last campaign, not even Jacobite France for which Kosciuszko's insurrection was a welcome and useful diversion in the struggle which the Convention was making against Austria and Prussia. Kosciuszko defended Warsaw against the king of Prussia and general Fersen; Henry Dombrowski raised Great Poland. But the secondary commanders showed no capacity and Kosciuszko himself, grievously wounded in the luckless battle of Maciejowice (Oct. 10th), was taken prisoner. On the 3rd of November, Suvorow stormed Prague, filling the streets with the corpses of thousands of massacred soldiers, old men, women and children, and giving up the suburbs to be the prey of the flames. Warsaw was forced to capitulate.

The three neighbours, after a violent quarrel between Prussia and Austria for Cracow, divided what remained of Poland. First, on Jan. 3rd 1795, Russia came to an agreement with Austria; Prussia which had enough to do at home accepted their arrangement on Oct. 24th, after having with some difficulty obtained from France, by the treaty of Bale (April 5th) full liberty of action in the East. Austria took the palatinates of Lublin and Sandomir, a part of that of Cracow, with the ancient capital of the Jagellons itself, and a part of that of Mazowia (60.740 sq. kilom.). Russia annexed Courland, Lithuania to the line of the Niemen, Volhynia and the land of Chelm up to the Bug (145 659 sq. kilom.). Finally, Prussia seized the rest, with Warsaw, that is to say the country situated between the Pilica, the Niemen and the Bug (about 72.829 sq. kilom.).

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#### IV

### Causes of the fall of the Republic

The Republic fell at the very time when the tide of regeneration was gathering volume, and when four years' efforts had proved to the world that the country was capable of breaking with the fatal errors of former times without losing what was sound and valuable in the inheritance that centuries of national life had accumulated. If the partitions became possible, it was because of the disintegration of the government which had gone on for a hundred years. And yet, in 1772, this disintegration was a thing of the past. *Therefore these partitions were accomplished by the incredibly crafty and criminal policy of its neighbours.* Poland lost its independence, not because it was not qualified to live, the brilliant expansion of Polish civilization in the 19th century is a striking proof of the contrary, but because it was giving its jealous neighbours too evident cause to dread its fitness for individual and independent existence. The pretext given for the *first partition of Poland* was, that its state of anarchy was a standing menace to its neighbours. The real motive was the fear inspired by the order which was returning. The constitution of the 3rd of May was abolished in the name of the rights of the nobility which this « tyrannous » act was said to imperil. In reality this so-called tyranny was ideal freedom when compared with the despotism and the inquisitorial system of Russia, Austria and Prussia. The reason put forward for the



*second partition* was that Poland was infested with « Jacobinism » whilst all this Polish radicalism was contained in the motto of Kosciuszko's rising : freedom, inviolability, independence. And these are what neither Catherine, nor Frederick the Great, nor Francis II, could tolerate in their dominions. The formation of the French Constituent Assembly was received with a thrill of joy throughout central and eastern Europe, and we may imagine what a breach would have been made in the « bronze sovereignty » of the Hohenzollerns, how the peoples subject to the crown of the Hapsburgs would have hailed the dawn of a new life, what tumultuous echoes would have been awakened on the banks of the Neva, if, in the midst of the nations leavened by the ferment of the encyclopedists, of Rousseau and of Voltaire, a living Poland had arisen between the three pillars of despotism in eastern Europe, a free and constitutional Poland, breaking the shackles of caste-privileges, a Poland without a guillotine and with fraternity as its motto. This glorious dawn of a better life, this modern incarnation of the idea of the Jagellons, was stifled in its cradle, and, to stifle it, three potentates united, whom no nation could have withstood, even if it had not been enfeebled by a long and disastrous crisis.

These three powers were urged to accomplish the partition by their desire of aggrandizement, the diplomats and the soldiers who were their instruments were led on by the thirst for plunder, and the appetites of each were satiated. The three governments united all their efforts to destroy a nation whose continued existence would have been a perpetual challenge to those who professed that nations are only made to serve the caprices of monarchs, who may mould them at will.

And yet these efforts resulted in a pitiable failure. Poland has never ceased to live its own life, full of promise and defying all constraint. The partition of Poland has only thrown into a more vivid light the absurdity of the old despotisms, and consecrated the new principle of the rights of nationalities.

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# Poland after the partitions

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## I

### **Destructive action of the co-partitioning States**

The treaties of 1795 blotted out Poland from the map of Europe. Shortly after, the *Convention of St. Petersburg* (26 January 1797), between Paul I, Frederick William II, and Francis II, attacked the unity of Polish life in its most intimate aspects, abolished in the three fragments of the race the idea of « triple nationality » (that is, of the Poles being the common subjects of the three States and thus retaining their bond of national unity), forced owners to sell the lands they possessed outside the limits of the State of which they had become the subjects, put every difficulty in the way of social or economic relations, and suppressed the very name of Pole. Then began the destructive campaign of exploitation in Austria, of eviction in Prussia and of transformation in Russia, which continued up to the great war.

The less changes were made in the civil administration, the more were introduced in the province of religion.

#### *1. Prussian Poland.*

The districts annexed to Prussia fell into the hands of an able administrator, Frederick. Out of them he formed the provinces of South Prussia (departments of Poznan,

Kalisz and Warsaw), of new Western Prussia (Plock and Bialystock), and of New-Silesia (detached territories of the palatinates of Cracow and Sandomierz). At the head of provinces were placed presidents; the departments were governed by «chambers» to which were subordinated in the vassal districts the «landrats», and in the towns the «*stadtrats*». In the departments justice was administered by the regencies, in the districts by commissions which did duty as courts of first instance. The whole social organism was cramped and crushed as in a vice by a complicated machinery of police and administration. The starosties and Church property fell into the hands of the Treasury, and the clergy only received a meagre allowance. Except as regards inheritance annuities, rents and tithes, the Prussian code took the place of the Polish law (*Verbessertes Landrecht* of 1721, *Corpus Juris Fridericianum* of 1781, *Allgemeines Landrecht* of 1795, and so on). This Prussian law system, though sometimes superior in form, was, at bottom, frequently defective in its out-of-date treatment of fundamental principles, for example in the use of the lash (*Rennschlittpeitsche*) and of other barbarous punishments. Moreover, the method of examination in criminal trials was defective, and the absence of cross-examination in civil procedure was susceptible of leading to serious abuses. These deficiencies did not exist in Polish law. A rigorous censorship was established. The action of the authorities, while deeply solicitous for the material welfare of its subjects, was evidently directed to their germanization. The government took the highest interest in the development of the towns and of agriculture, and it made every effort to assimilate the Jewish elements upon which it counted, and with reason, for spreading German influence. Every

measure enacted showed its desire to accentuate the divisions between the different classes of society. Germanism was encouraged by the administration, the courts of law and secondary education. Primary instruction was systematically neglected and gradually fell away from the high standard it had reached under the Education Commission. Prussia refused to allow the creation of a new university. Mortgage-loans were encouraged, in order to allow the Polish peasant or landowner to contract heavy and ruinous debts. An army of 9.000 foreign functionaries, at once covetous and unscrupulous, invaded the country. They were given a chief worthy of them, Hoym, president of Southern Prussia. Voss, who succeeded to this post in 1798, in concert with Schrötter, the president of New Eastern Prussia, by granting special facilities to Germans, induced them to settle on the Crown lands from which Polish tenants were mercilessly banished, while the peasant labourers were retained and ground down without pity. By the side of this Germanization on a large scale it was easy to make a show of magnanimity by tolerating the creation, at Warsaw, of the Society of the Friends of Science (1800).

## 2. *Austrian Poland.*

The territories assigned to Austria under the title of Kingdom of Galicia and Lodomeria, together with « new » or western Galicia, annexed in 1795, became a field for experiments on the part of the government, while at the same time the depredations committed by the administrators showed that the Austrians had but faint hopes of keeping these territories permanently. The old administrative order was hastily overturned to make place for

a new, but an inefficient, one. Experiments were tried in Galicia which the rulers did not dare to make in other parts of Hapsburgh dominions.

A governor was installed in Lwow (1772); the country was cut up into districts and sub-districts (Kreise); a flock of functionaries and adventurers, German or half-Slav, birds of prey infatuated with the importance of their «civilizing» mission, descended on the province. By letters patent of the 3rd of July 1775, Maria Theresa divided her new subjects into four social classes. The princes, counts, barons, archbishops, bishops and mitred prelates constituted the order of *magnates*. The Queen created (in theory, for it only met under Joseph II, 1780-1790), a «postulatory» Diet, which was to deliberate only on the manner (*quomodo*) of executing the mandates of the government, without inquiring into the cause (*cur*), and possessing no private initiative. Under the presidency of the governor a Court of Appeal was instituted and later (1784) a Tribunal for the Nobility. On the ruins of the old «academy» of Lwow rose the Josephine University (1784-1805) where all the lectures were given in German, and several German schools. German became the language of the Law-courts and of the Public Offices in 1785. Joseph II confiscated ecclesiastical properties and attributed them to what was called the Religions Funds (1782) and he suppressed the greater part of the monasteries. The Crown lands called «Cameral» lands were colonized with German settlers. The emperor settled the agrarian question in a manner which was most prejudicial to the whole social body. It is true that he reduced the peasants' rents and statute labour; but he imposed on the nobility the duty of receiving the taxes, as well as that of levying recruits in their domains. This system gave rise, as it was bound to do, to bickerings and quarrels between



peasant and landlord; and to settle these disputes, Joseph instituted (1782) vassals' advocates who became real agents of social discord. No Polish district was constrained to furnish so many recruits as Galicia during this period of incessant, desperate and unsuccessful wars waged by Austria against revolutionary or imperial France. In view of the sacrifices which it cost, the emancipation of the peasants (1782) was a dearly-bought and precarious advantage. In addition to this, the devastated country was burdened with taxes ten times heavier than before the annexation. Every year, 30 million good Polish florins in hard cash were buried in the coffers of Vienna, and in exchange «assignats» (paper-money) were received, which the bankruptcy of the State soon reduced to a fifth of their nominal value (1811). Thus it was that one of the richest Polish countries was reduced to a state of inconceivable poverty, the traces of which have not been effaced up to the present time. The reforms of the four years' Diet awoke certain echoes in Galicia, but the liberal movement was soon crushed without pity.

### 3. *Russian Poland.*

The laws which were in vigour in the governments of the Empire were extended to Lithuania and Ruthenia. However, owing to the lack of elements of russification, the Empire was forced to allow to subsist in Lithuania : the supreme court of Wilno, the elected regional tribunals, the Lithuanian Statute (code), the dietines of the Governments which met every three years to elect the functionaries. After Kosciuszko's insurrection, the most compromised persons were punished by *transportation*, their *goods confiscated* and distributed as spoils among the favourites of the Empress and the victorious generals.

Catherine II especially directed her efforts to deepen the breach between the peasants and the higher classes. On the one hand she aggravated the lot of the peasants by assimilating them to the Russian mujiks, by giving them over absolutely into the hands of their lords, and by imposing on them twenty five years' military service. On the other, she strove to root out the *Greek Uniate faith*. Immediately after the 1772 Partition. White Ruthenia lost its Uniate Metropolitane (Smogorzewski), and Orthodox priests were gradually substituted to the Uniate parish-priests. After 1793 the Empress, profiting by the discouragement of the vanquished, forced numbers of the Uniates to pass over to Orthodoxy, and for this she did not hesitate to use coercion, the lash, military executions and imprisonment. The Uniate bishops were shut up in monasteries. To the Metropolitane, Rostocki, was given the choice between exile at Rome, or at Petersburg. One bishopric only, that of Polock, was allowed to retain its archbishop, Lissowski. This prelate, who became a docile instrument in the hands of the Russian government, forbade his Uniate clergy to dissuade the people from apostatizing. In this manner, the Orthodox church gained more than two million new subjects; of the 5.000 Uniate churches in Wolhynia and Podolia, scarcely 200 remained in 1796. To sever from Polish tendencies the Catholic elements of the new provinces, the tsarina constituted the Archbishopric of Polock to which she appointed one of her creatures, the ambitious Siestrzencewicz; after the second and third Partition, the bishoprics of Pinsk and Kamieniec were joined thereto. Rome lost all immediate influence on Catholics in Russia, notwithstanding its conciliating attitude. Clement XIV had abolished the Jesuits; Catherine maintained the Order in White Ruthenia, as Frederick II did in Silesia. These two sovereigns wished thereby to

affirm the preponderance of their authority and to keep the property of the Order under their control. They hoped, moreover, to use the grateful Order in propagating loyalist feelings towards themselves among their new subjects.

Catherine's successor Paul I (1796-1801) was more friendly to the Poles. The partition of Poland he considered a mistake. He restored Kosciuszko and the exiled Poles to liberty; in the provinces he reconstituted the dietines for the election of government officers and district marshals. The systematic persecution of the Uniates was abandoned, and the Catholic Church even received a certain encouragement from the tzar, who saw in it, and in the society of Jesus, the best arm against free-thought. The administration of public education, with the University of Wilno, was entrusted to the Jesuits.

In 1801, Paul I perished by the hand of an assassin. The young emperor, Alexander I, inaugurated an epoch of « liberal » government. The Uniates obtained a new diocese, that of Wilno, and a separate ecclesiastical organization, independent from that of the Catholics of the Latin rite. Public Instruction passed into secular hands, under the direction of prince Adam Czartoryski, the friend and confidant of the sovereign. The university of Wilno, reorganized by its curator Czartoryski (1803), became a centre of Polish thought and culture, and its name was written in letters of gold in the literary and scientific annals of the nation. Two years later, Thaddeus Czacki founded the public school of Krzemieniec, another intellectual centre on the eastern confines of Poland.

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## II

### The legions

The political effort of the Polish nation took refuge partly in dark and secret plots, partly in activity in foreign countries. The Partitions were hardly completed before a secret *Confederation* of the Poles, which placed its hopes on France, was constituted in Cracow; other conspiracies were soon formed in Galicia and Lithuania and entered into secret relations with the emigrated Poles whose centre was first in Leipzig (1792-1793), then in Venice, later in Constantinople, and finally in Paris. Here, in the capital which harboured the Convention and the Directory, they chose a directing committee (Joseph Wybicki, Barss, etc.) whose authority was recognized by the « Confederation » in Cracow. There followed some attempts at armed risings, with the help of Turkey. The idea was put forward of dissolving the union of the three co-partitioning States and trying to harmonize the solution of the Polish question with the interests of Prussia which had been reconciled with France by the treaty of Bâle. But Frederick William II did not allow General Dombrowski to tempt him so far as to re-establish the Polish state. Dombrowski then concluded an arrangement with the Cisalpine government and created in Lombardy the *Polish Legions*. These legions wore the Polish uniform, enjoyed Italian civil rights and were in the paid service of France. They had taken as their motto : « gli uomini liberi sono fratelli »; these warriors marched to the warlike accents of the anthem « Jeszcze Polska nie

zginela » (No, Poland is not dead) and esteemed they were performing a national duty and serving their country in fighting for France. They fought the campaign of Naples, helped in the taking of Rome, and shared in the contests of the French army against Suworof (1799). They had numbered several thousand men but were soon reduced to as many hundred, yet new men constantly offered themselves to fill the diminished ranks. The *Danubian legion* of Kniaziewicz decided the victory of Hohenlinden (2 Dec. 1800). Bonaparte accepted this heroic sacrifice for reasons of State which know no pity. After the capitulation of Mantua, the legionaries were handed over to Austria, and after the peace of Lunéville, these fighters for freedom were sent to San Domingo to crush the freedom of the negroes and to die of fever, or of wounds inflicted by the revolted blacks.

But the blood of this chivalrous race was not shed in vain. It served at least to prove the unquenchable love of the Polish nation for liberty; it testified to the resurrection of Poland before the tribunal of the conscience of Europe. For a time it seemed that the Polish question would be solved, not by Napoleon, but by Alexander I, and that this would be done in the only efficient way, by uniting the fragments of ancient Poland into a reconstituted Polish state. Under the influence of prince Adam Czartoryski, the friend of his childhood, the grandson of Catherine II thought of granting their liberty to the peoples under his sway, and becoming the constitutional king of Poland. Meanwhile Czartoryski was named curator of the university district of Wilno, and whilst the great Polish school flourished under this enlightened direction, Thaddeus Czacki created the model high-school of Krzemieniec (1805). Prince Adam Czartoryski, who was for some years (1804-1806) foreign minister of Russia,



wished to reconstitute Poland and attach it fraternally to Russia, as well as to deliver the Balkan peoples. In September 1805, the emperor, after having signed an alliance with England, Sweden and Austria, went to reside at Pulawy, the seat of the princes Czartoryski, where he conferred with the representatives of the two German Polands who were acquainted with prince Adam's aims. It was thought, on the one hand, that Russia might go to war with France and Prussia, and, on the other, that Galicia might be recovered by an exchange of territories. At the last, the influences from Berlin and the fear of the Prussian army prevailed. From Pulawy Alexander went straight to Berlin and Potsdam, and there, on the tomb of Frederick the Great, he swore friendship with the successors of that prince and joined them against France. It was the first step on the road which was to lead to Austerlitz (1805), to Iena and Auerstaedt (1806), to Friedland (1807).

### III

## Duchy of Warsaw

The Emperor of the French wanted peace with Russia. But at the same time he wished to weaken Prussia in order that it should not be able to retaliate on him. On the other hand he did not know what to do with those new provinces called « Eastern Prussia » and « New Eastern Prussia » which had risen like one man at the news of his approach, had thrown off their new rulers and had proved to the world their essentially Polish character.



He proposed, at the deliberations of Tilsit, to cede Prussian Poland to Alexander, but the latter declined the offer and suggested the creation of a small Polish State. Things went no further (1807). Soon, however, this new state sprang into existence under the leadership of *Frederick Augustus*, the king of Saxony and grandson of Augustus III. It took the name of Duchy of Warsaw. It was composed of the departments of Poznan, Bydgoszcz, Warsaw, Kalisz, Lomza and Plock, with the exclusion of the district of Bialystok which continued to form part of Russia and a part of the district of the Notec which was left to Prussia, or in all 100.000 sq. kilometers and 2.500.000 inhabitants. Gdansk remained a free city.

The hopes which the Poles had had in Napoleon were now shattered. The very name of Duchy was the negation of the Polish national aspirations. The artificial limits of the new State, which had no ethnographic or strategical value, could not hold out hopes of stability. After eight months of administration by what was called the Government Commission, the Duchy obtained (July 22nd) a *constitution* dictated by Napoleon, which was an echo of the French law of the 28th Floréal of the year XII, and was analogous to the numerous constitutions which the emperor gave to his ephemeral creations. The democratic idea (equality of all citizens before the law, personal liberty of the peasants) and toleration (freedom of religious worship) were combined with considerable restrictions of political rights and of the monarchical tendency. The *Duke* was granted considerable powers, not only executive but even legislative, to the prejudice of the Diet. The constitution took little account of Polish traditions. It guaranteed, it is true, to the nobility their traditional share in parliamentary life, it recognized Catholicism as the State religion, it maintained the division

of the Diet into two Chambers, and followed Polish custom in the choosing of the Senate; but in all things else it was organized after the French model.

*The administration* was centralized in the true French manner, with the system of unipersonal authorities; the very French titles of functionaries were employed; justice was organized on the French system; in 1808 the French civil code and French civil procedure were introduced, and in 1809 the French commercial code.

All these innovations of French origin, especially in legal matters and procedure were only slowly welded into Polish traditions. Nevertheless, at the period of intense Russification of the XIXth century, they helped to defend the Poles against the attempts made on their liberties.

The following are the leading features of the new organization. The *senate* was composed at first of 18 members; these became 30 after the annexation of Galicia. A third of these were Bishops, and the other two thirds were appointed by the ruler. In legislative matters the senate acted as a court of control. Its duty was to see that the prescriptions of legislative procedure were observed and that the articles of the constitution were respected both by the Chamber of deputies and by the monarch.

The *Chamber of deputies* was composed of the Cabinet Ministers or State Councillors and 61 deputies (100 after the annexation of Galicia). All were elected by the dietines of the nobility of the districts. To these members must be added 40 deputies (66 later with Galicia), who were elected in the urban-rural circumscriptions by electors who possessed the franchise, either by right of their degree of instruction, or fortune, or by their function.

The *Diet* could only meet, on principle, once every two

years for fifteen days. In fact it met three times, in 1809, 1811 and as an extraordinary session in 1812. Its competence was limited to the fiscal budget and currency questions, to civil and criminal legislation; all that concerned the constitution of the State was out of its jurisdiction. It possessed no initiative, nor the right of modifying the bills presented to it. Its deliberations were generally confided to commissions.

The constitution introduced a Council of State into the Duchy. This institution was unknown in ancient Poland. The Council was formed by the ministers of State, and, after 1808, six additional State Councillors were appointed by the sovereign. « Referendaries » (a sort of consulting councillors) could be called in to help. The Council studied the details of bills, and acted as court of appeal for the Duchy, and finally they watched over the general interests of the country and its administration:

The *monarch* and his *responsible ministers* exercised the executive power: justice, home affairs, religious worship, war, treasury and police. A minister, secretary of state, served as intermediary between the authorities of the Duchy and the monarch, and as there was no foreign minister, the politics of Warsaw were subordinate to those of Saxony, which were themselves under the direction of France.

As the ministers possessed wide general powers in their own departments, and as the ruler resided abroad almost perpetually, the government had no unity of action. Nor could the consulting ministers, whose competence was restricted, give it the desired unity.

*For administrative purposes* the country was divided into six departments<sup>1</sup>. Later, after the incorporation of Ga-

<sup>1</sup> Warsaw, Kalisz. Poznan, Bydgoszcz, Plock, Lomza.

licia, there were ten. Each had a prefect at its head. The departments were divided into districts (*arrondissements*), under sub-prefects. The cities were administered by presidents, with assessors (Warsaw, Poznan, Kalisz, Torun), the smaller towns by burgomasters. The villages had mayors appointed by the prefects and chosen amongst the inhabitants of the villages who could read and write.

To the state administration were joined *department councils* and district councils composed of members elected by the dietines and receiving their nomination or commission from the Sovereign. These councils were chiefly consulting bodies; they could criticize the regulations and acts of functionaries and settle the assessment of taxes voted by the Diet. In the towns and villages, independent councils were instituted whose task was to deliberate or supervise. They were, it is true, completely under the power of the prefect or minister, and did not possess any executive officers of their own. As a matter of fact, they never came into operation in the villages.

The men of Warsaw, at the instigation of Kollontaj (*Nil desperandum*), accepted the new State as a step towards something better, and profited by this concession in the interest of the greater fatherland they hoped to found. During the new campaign of the French army (1809) Joseph Poniatowski, general-in-chief of the armies of the Duchy, after the glorious field of *Raszyn* (April 19th), penetrated, in the name of Napoleon, into « New Galicia », then into old Galicia and seized Cracow (in July). By virtue of the treaty of Vienna (Oct. 14th) and by a decree of the Duchy of Warsaw (Dec. 9th 1809) New Galicia became a part of the Duchy. It furnished the departments of Cracow, Radom, Lublin, Siedlce, about 50.000 sq. kilom. with nearly a million and a half inha-

bitants. Eastern Galicia, with the exception of the circumscriptions of Tarnopol and Zbaraz, ceded to Russia, remained subject to Austria. The co-proprietorship of the salt mines of Wieliczka was secured for the Duchy.

The new State, whose military expenses absorbed about half its resources, was ground down with taxes. The continental blockade paralyzed trade. Napoleon gave to his marshals twenty-seven domains representing a total value of 26.500.000 francs. The result of all this was a growing distress and growing deficits, for which there was no remedy. Under pretence of lightening the burden of the Duchy, Napoleon took into his pay 8.000 men of the army of Warsaw, and sent them to Spain. This contingent formed the infantry of Chlopicki which distinguished itself at the siege of Saragossa, and the cavalry of Koziatulski whose lancers performed prodigies of valour at the attack of the defile of Somosierra (1808).

The Duchy endeavoured to protect what remained of the industries which had existed before the Partitions. Foreign workmen were sent for; they were granted privileges. The basis was laid for a rational administration of public charity, of the postal service, of roads and transports. Notwithstanding economic difficulties, the Duchy found the means to defray public instruction which had been neglected by the Austrians and Prussians during their occupation of the country. The Chamber of Education (1808) restored the Polish lectures at the University of Cracow (1809); a school of medicine was established at Warsaw; in the departments more than 1600 secondary. and especially primary schools, were opened. Far from giving way to discouragement, public opinion was bold enough to criticize the authorities at the diets of 1809 and 1811. *The fact that Napoleon had in 1810 signed a convention with Alexander I against the reconstitution of*



*Poland* was ignored in the country. This convention, however, was of as short duration as the ephemeral and insincere friendship between the two potentates. The hope of a brilliant future was in every heart when suddenly, in the spring of 1812, Napoleon declared war on Russia and undertook what he called « the second campaign of Poland ». The Duchy raised for its founder an army of 100.000 men who took part in the epic expedition of Moscow; and they displayed all the traditional virtues of the Polish soldier : fidelity, courage and discipline. It was thanks to them that Napoleon's artillery was saved from inevitable disaster under the walls of Moscow. It was their arm which protected the retreat of the Grande Armée near the Beresina. And although in February 1813 the whole country was in the hands of Alexander, Prince Joseph Poniatowski did not hesitate, for the honour of Poland, to hasten to Napoleon's assistance at Leipzig where, after opposing a glorious resistance to the enemy's superior numbers, he was drowned in the Elster, in an attempt to swim the river (Oct. 19th).

The Duchy was short-lived, and its existence was one of vexation and tragedy. But the social body came out of the Napoleonic disaster rejuvenated and democratized. Poland arose living and famous out of the treaties of partition which had been designed to annihilate it.

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## IV

### The Congress of Vienna

Alexander I, Napoleon's most successful opponent on the continent, harked back on his own account to his designs for the reconstitution of Poland. Besides Czartoryski, several important persons encouraged him in this plan, such as the Lithuanian Michael Oginski and two ministers of the expiring Duchy, Mostowski and Matuszewicz. Finally Thaddeus Kosciuszko counselled him, in 1814, to proclaim himself king of the whole of Poland, and to emancipate the peasants. Alexander recognized the representative position of the Polish army, and came to the Congress of Vienna with the firm intention of restoring Poland.

The retrospective principle of legitimate prescription tended to the reconstitution of Europe on the basis of its state previous to 1792, and consequently, of giving back to Poland the frontiers it had possessed at the time of the Great Diet; on the other hand, the new principle of nationalities, then just revealed, would have given Poland still wider limits. But those who had overthrown Napoleon applied to Poland neither one principle nor the other. Prussia, it is true, would have acceded to Alexander's wishes, on condition of obtaining compensations in Saxony and elsewhere, but Austria (that is to say, Metternich) did not consent either to dispossess Frederick Augustus, or to the aggrandizement of Prussia in Germany. France (Talleyrand), in consideration of its kinship and alliance with the House of Saxony, and England (Castlereagh) through fear of Russian influence, joined their

voices to that of Austria. These three diplomatists, while voting in the name of their respective States for the independence of Poland (Oct. 1814), concluded on Jan. 3rd 1815, a secret compact which opposed the idea of a Poland unified at the expense of Saxony. Napoleon's return from the isle of Elba prevented their coming to blows on the question, but the final result was that their machinations forced the Congress of Vienna to adopt half-measures, and to give a bastard solution to the Polish question. Prussia obtained a part of Saxony and was given back Poznań and Western Prussia; Austria took Western Galicia and Tarnopol. With what remained of the Duchy of Warsaw a Polish Kingdom was created for Alexander, and Cracow was declared a free Republic. The final Act of June 9th 1815 guaranteed to the Polish subjects of Austria, Prussia and Russia national representation and national institutions.

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## V

### Conclusion

The decisions of the Congress of Vienna open up a new epoch in the history of the territories of the Republic. From the international point of view they constitute the basis of public law and rights which have regulated their existence during the last hundred years.

We shall show, further on, how the three fragments of Poland organized their existence, and how the three co-partitioning States perpetrated various criminal attempts upon the material and moral life of the Polish nation, while taking shelter behind the clauses of the treaty of Vienna, or even by openly violating them. These crimes,

after 1815, are after all only the continuation of the work begun by the Partitions which the modifications due to Napoleon's influence had only momentarily interrupted.

These injustices form, when taken together, an imposing manifestation, in which the use on a large scale of destructive forces has resulted in numberless examples of a refined and unheard-of cruelty, and they constitute a phenomenon which is unique at an epoch which proclaimed the dogma of the rights of nationalities and the respect of civic rights; especially if we take into account the high degree of civilization of the victim thus condemned to death, the intensity of its national aspirations and the greatness of its historical tradition.

Before studying in detail the combat which the three empires waged on the Polish nation, let us give a glance at the nature of the struggle and the consequences it has had for the Poles considered as constituting a single and indivisible nation.

One of the three States, Austria, after many long years of plunder and spoliation, understood at last that, instead of vainly combating the indestructible individuality of a nation with a thousand years' tradition, and thus turning one of its provinces into an active volcano, it was better policy to try to establish a moral bond with it and try to win it over to be friendly. It must not be supposed from this that the Poles ever obtained in Austria their full rights or equal treatment, even in economic questions, but it is no longer considered a crime for them to wish to conduct their own destinies and to direct their own culture. The two other despoilers, Russia and Prussia, on the contrary, have continued to follow their « reasons of State », which have ever been hostile to the Polish nation. Taking example from one another, they have vied with each other to lower themselves in the world's esteem

by imitating each other's methods of oppression, and encouraging one another in their tyranny. The Prussian expropriation system was based on Russian precedents of the time of Nicolas and Mouraviev in Lithuania, whilst the crafty legislation of men like Milioutine, was an echo of the methods of Frederick II of Prussia and of Joseph II of Austria. The Land Bank of Lithuania is scarcely less successful in eliminating the Polish element than the Russian Colonization Commission. There were, it is true, times of respite when some Prussian or Russian statesman was forced to admit the uselessness of attempts at germanization or russification. But the apparent truce did not prevent each party keeping a watchful eye on its opponent. A natural instinct bade the persecutors follow the old adage and « *odisse quem laeseris* ». The honour of their State, the desire to keep up their power and prestige made them remain faithful to the motto « *nunquam retrorsum* ». Neither took any account of the bitterness which persecution kindled in the hearts of the victims; neither reflected on the deteriorating influence which the habit of tyranny engenders in the tyrant himself. Thus was instituted in the Kingdom of the Congress a system of dungeons and espionage which were used later against Russian revolutionaries and socialists; and the Prussian schoolmaster, as well as the Prussian martinet, used his authority to torture children, as at Wrzesnia, to dissolve meetings, to gag Polish newspapers in Poznan, strengthening chauvinism and reaction in Prussia and throwing dishonour on German culture.

This complicity of Prussia and Russia was successful as long as their sovereigns followed the same course, but when they came to disagree and opposed each other in a deadly antagonism, they might well ask themselves in whose interest they had divided the peaceful Republic and

striven to exterminate the Poles. Had they obtained their end, or had they not rather launched on an unfortunate venture? Were they safer within their respective frontiers now that Poland had been divided among them?

The three fragments of the living organism, seven times violently vivisected (1772, 1793, 1795, 1807, 1809, 1815, 1846) and oppressed in various ways, have never ceased to feel that they belonged to one body, or to show that they felt it, and this never more strongly than when they were being severed from each other. Wherever and whenever it has been possible for the Poles to develop freely any part of their activity, for example in the Duchy of Warsaw and the Kingdom of Poland, from 1807 to 1831, in Poznań between 1840 and 1870, in Galicia from 1860 to the present time, they have given manifest proof, not only of the continued existence, but even of the advance of their capacity for public life and their aptitude for progress. The fraction which happened to be momentarily in favourable circumstances grouped and fostered in its bosom the intellectual and moral activities of the whole national body, and was a source of light and heat to its brothers in trouble. On the whole, the numerous attempts to destroy or demoralize the nation, to gag or to coerce it, have proved ineffectual; its living energy has burst all bonds and come out triumphant. The Polish territories have been narrowed and circumscribed, but the Polish people have multiplied and *reached a total of 24 million souls*; and the creative power of the Polish intellect has expanded more and more. The risings of 1830 and 1863, while they have mutilated the body of the nation, have at the same time served to fix in the conscience of Europe a lesson and a warning, and constitute a sublime act of faith : *I struggle and I suffer, therefore I exist.*

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# History of Poland since 1815



# The Poles under the domination of Prussia 1815-1914

## I

### The execution of the treaty of Vienna

Frederick William III, king of Prussia, detached from that part of the Duchy of Warsaw, which the treaty of Vienna had given him, the territories of Chelmno (Culm) and of Michalow, as well as the city of Torun (Thorn); he joined them arbitrarily and for political reasons to the province of Western Prussia. What remained and came to be called the Grand Duchy of Poznan (30.000 sq. kilom. and 1.100.000 inhabitants in 1815) received from the king, by the act of occupation of May 15th 1815, the promise that its national customs should be respected, that Poles should be admitted to all public offices, and that the Polish tongue should be used in public documents. The Poznanians obtained, moreover, a provincial administration and the participation in the privileges of the constitution which the king «purposed giving to his faithful subjects». The administrative independence of Poznan was confirmed by several facts : the king of Prussia assumed the title of Grand Duke of Poznan; the ducal arms bore testimony to the Polish character of the

country; a form of oath was devised for functionaries in which the Grand Duchy was called the «fatherland» of the juror. A separate organization of justice and procedure were maintained, natives were to be chosen by preference for public offices. A Pole, prince Antony Radziwill (husband of the princess Louise of Hohenzollern), was the first lieutenant-governor. This *Lieutenant* had the right to question the action of local authorities and the duty of laying before the king the petitions and desires of the population. His was, however, a chiefly representative character, the real direction of affairs belonged to the *higher president*, a post which was confided to a citizen of the province, Zerboni di Sposetti, an honest liberal-minded German, well disposed towards the Poles. The Grand Duchy was divided into two regency districts, that of Poznan (Posen) and that of Bydgoszcz (Bromberg). At the head of the districts were placed *landrats* (sub-prefects), chosen by election.

As long as violation of the constitution in the Kingdom of Poland did not encourage the neighbouring powers to similar breaches of the treaty of Vienna, the higher administration of Poznania endeavoured to respect the spirit of the stipulations of that treaty. Two measures which contributed to the democratic progress and economic reorganization of the country were, first, the creation of the *Land credit Society* (1821), and secondly the *abolition of statute-labour*, which was replaced by a fair compensation to the landlords and a reasonable tax imposed on the peasant, the compensation and the tax being assessed by specially constituted local commissions in whose labours the most enlightened of the great landowners took an important part (1823). The Board of Education showed at first a generous conception of the language question and solved it in the most logical

way. Starting from the principle that knowledge can only be conveyed in the mother-tongue and that, besides, germanization would only secure citizens of doubtful value to the State, the Board had German taught in the schools as an obligatory, but only secondary subject; it was not used as the ordinary vehicle of instruction. There was even at one time a question of creating a separate Polish army, and, with this object, general Amilkar Kosinski, formerly of the Legion, was consulted. But, little by little, other tendencies showed themselves. In the years which followed the Congress, the government made serious efforts to germanize Silesia, to put Western and Eastern Prussia on the same footing, to win over the citizens of Gdansk (Dantzic) and to prussify them. Under the influence of Metternich the project of introducing representative government throughout the Kingdom was abandoned. Provincial diets were considered sufficient. It was only in 1827 that the Grand Duchy was granted one of these diets. It was composed of four magnates, twenty deputies from the nobility, sixteen from the burgher-class and eight from the peasants; its deliberations were not public, nor had its decisions any absolute force; its petitions concerning national questions were always politely set aside. Meanwhile, from 1817 onward, the German language was given an ever wider application in the tribunals, the Polish tongue began to be systematically excluded from the teaching in the secondary and superior schools; and Zerboni's first successor, Baumann (1825), under the pretext of an equal distribution of offices, gave to Germans an enormous numerical preponderance in public functions.

*The Revolution of the Kingdom of Poland in 1830* awoke deep echoes in the Polish territories of Prussia. A mass of Poles hastened to join the rising. Lieutenant-

governor, Radziwill, resigned his post and was not given a successor. Flotwell became higher-president. Following in the footsteps of Paskiewicz, the Russian lieutenant-governor of the Kingdom of Poland, he inaugurated in the Grand Duchy an anti-Polish policy, directed especially against the nobility. The lands belonging to those who had gone to fight with the kingdom against Russia were sequestered. A convention was concluded with Russia for the extradition of military deserters and other fugitives. The decrees of 1832 and 1834 limited still further the use of the Polish tongue in the schools, in administration and in law; the population of the Duchy lost the right of electing its landrats (1833) and its mayors; finally, by the ministerial decree of March 13th 1833, a State Fund (to which the Poles were obliged to contribute) was formed with the object of buying up Polish landed property. This enterprise was fairly successful. The Polish proprietors were at that time heavily in debt, owing to the sacrifices they had made for the war of 1830-1831 and the economic crisis which had followed on the abolition of statute-labour. In addition to this, the State banks often forced their debtors to sell their properties by calling in outstanding debts unexpectedly. The consequence was that a number of Polish estates, through the pressure of the Prussian government, passed into German hands. Under such conditions the German population could not fail to increase rapidly. Besides, the government showered its favours on these immigrants, and especially on the schoolmasters. The funds derived from the secularization of ecclesiastical property and the fines inflicted on citizens who had taken part in the anti-Russian revolution of 1830-1831, were consecrated in great part to subsidize the protestant schools. In order to hasten germanization, the government attempted, in direct contradiction to the laws of the



Catholic Church, to force its priests to bless mixed marriages between Catholics and Protestants. Flotwell imprisoned Archbishop Dunin for having protested against these acts of violence at Kolobrzeg (Kolberg) (4 Oct. 1839). In vain the Diets protested to the king against the government's policy (1832-1837). The more moderate Germans themselves were indignant at the arrogance of the higher-president towards the Poles. As a matter of fact, the attitude of the German population, contrasting with that of the government, was sympathetic and sometimes even enthusiastic towards the Poles in their efforts to regain their liberty (1831). These feelings manifest themselves in the poetry of the epoch (Mosen, Uhland, Heine), in popular songs, in the press. Were not the Germans themselves on the eve of a struggle to obtain constitutional rights?

On the 7th of June 1840, Frederick William IV ascended the throne. This event was followed by a period of respite for the liberal elements among the Germans as well as for the Poles. In Poznan, in Western Prussia, in Saxony, the victims of the persecutions of Nicolas I found a harbour of refuge. The king set Archbishop Dunin at liberty, pardoned the Poznanians who had been condemned for taking part in the revolution against Russia, and removed Flotwell to another post (1841). Polish appeared again in primary schools and in the lower classes of secondary schools in which Polish pupils formed the majority. The language of the country was put on the same footing as German in the law-courts. The Grand Duchy of Poznan became for a few years the most cultured of the three fractions of Poland; this was the time when Galicia and the Kingdom were groaning under the oppression of Metternich and Paskiewicz. Poznan attracted, or herself produced, remarkable phi-

losophers, Libelt, Aug. Cieszkowski, Trentowski, poets and novelists, Berwinski, F. Morawski, Stan. Kozmian, historians and scientific writers, Edward Raczynski, Titus Dzialynski. Charles Marcinkowski created the Society for helping students (1841) and the « Bazar of Poznan » which has remained the commercial centre of the town.

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## II

### Struggle of the Poles for national rights

At this period, under the influence of the liberal ideas which were spreading over Germany and the whole of Europe, much plotting and scheming was going on secretly. Since 1843 there had existed in the Grand Duchy a revolutionary committee in close touch with the Democratic Society in Paris. The agitation was spread through Poznan and Western Prussia. The insurrection was to break out on Feb. 14th 1846, but on the eve of the day agreed upon, the police arrested the man who had been chosen to lead the revolt, Louis Mieroslawski, as well as several of the conspirators. Two hundred and fifty four persons were dragged before the tribunal; eight were condemned to death, many others were imprisoned. However, the course of events suspended the execution of the sentence. All the sympathies of the public, not only of the Poles, but even of the Germans, were enlisted for the condemned. German democracy looked upon them as heroes in the cause of freedom, allies in the struggle for the rights of man. Two years later, under the impression of the exci-

tement caused by the famous days of March when the people of Berlin rose to obtain a constitution, and after the Polish prisoners had been set free by the people of the capital, the revolutionary tide overflowed also in the Grand Duchy of Poznanian. At the outset it followed the current of German liberal opinion against Russia, the stronghold of reaction. The Polish and German committees acted in concert in propagating revolutionary ideas, the liberals urging Frederick William to make war against Nicholas. It was in this conjuncture that the idea of the autonomy of the Grand Duchy came up again; it was even discussed in government circles. When there was a project of convoking the Diet at Frankfort, the Poles declared that they objected to the Grand Duchy a Polish country, forming part of the German Confederation. The Poznanians solicited from the King a Polish administration and a Polish army, which Mieroslawski was already forming. The king confided the reorganization of the Grand Duchy to general Willisen, who promised to create national institutions on the condition that 10,000 Polish troops, which had already been levied, should be disbanded. Although the Polish party acceded to this request, the government, none the less, broke off the pact which had been negotiated at Jaroslawice. After a brief campaign (defeat of Mieroslawski on the 29th of April 1848, victory of Miloslaw on the 30th, defeat of Wrzesnia on May 2nd), the insurgent forces were dispersed. Meanwhile the German Poznanians started an active agitation against an autonomous national reorganization of the Grand Duchy, and asked for the country to be divided into a Polish and a German zone, the latter to be exempted from the promised reorganization. This German petition was complied with and the division decreed by the government on April 14th 1848, and on the

22nd of the same month, the Diet of Frankfort proclaimed that the districts of Poznanian which were in majority German were admitted into the German Confederation. This decision produced a sensation throughout the country. Libelt, Niegolewski and their friends sent in a protestation to the parliament at Frankfort, but no notice was taken of it. The decision of the Frankfort parliament, while it gave no sort of satisfaction to the aspirations of the Poles, nevertheless secured to the non-German peoples the free development of their national life and the equal rights of languages within their ethnographical limits. But it was never put in force. The principle of the equality of languages was lost sight of in the projects of Prussian constitution. The upshot has been that the Prussian constitution of Jan. 31st 1850, which still governs that kingdom, recognizes not only the whole of the Duchy of Poznanian (without defining any zones) as an integral part of the Kingdom of Prussia, but does not even contain a single article touching national guarantees. A growing reaction weighed on the land up to the death of Frederick William, not so much by the fault of the king who was fast losing his reason, as through the vexations inflicted by the higher president Puttkamer. The Polish League, the greatest Polish association of the time, was dissolved, a number of newspapers were suspended. The activity of the Land Credit Society was thwarted so as to force the great landed estates into bankruptcy in years of scarcity. To the old Land Credit Society a new one was substituted, of evident German tendencies. The government exercised strong pressure on the elections to the Diet. The police director, Baerensprung did not hesitate to disseminate revolutionary proclamations inviting the people to revolt, in order to justify an anti-Polish repression policy. M. L. Niegolewski, the head of the Polish

deputation at the Prussian Landtag revealed these shameful machinations before the face of the parliament.

Despite the difficulties constantly created by the Prussian authorities to oppose Polish progress, the nation, shaken by the disasters of 1848, gradually resumed the regular movement of political and social life. The Society of the Friends of Science developed satisfactorily; the first workmen's societies and peasants' clubs began to be formed; free Polish libraries helped to spread instruction, which penetrated more and more into various social classes. Meanwhile the consciousness of national unity was awakening in Polish lands outside the Grand Duchy of Poznanian; the Kaschoubs and the Silesians (with the deputy Szafranek) fought for the rights of the Polish language in the school, the Church and the public offices. In 1848 the deputies from the other Polish districts of Prussia joined the Poznanian deputies, at the Landtag, in their claims for national rights.

The insurrection of 1863, which set Russian Poland on fire, was not without an echo in Poznanian and in Eastern Prussia. Prussian Poland took its share in the sacrifices, and affirmed its solidarity and its community of views with the Russian Poles, though without deceiving itself as to the ultimate results of this armed revolt. It had later to expiate its participation in the movement by numberless political prosecutions, by banishments and confiscations. But these sacrifices did not weaken the national life nor make the Poles less active in their defensive struggle against the Germans.

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### III

## Efforts of the Prussian government and of the Germans to exterminate the Poles

After Puttkamer had been discharged from his post, in 1861, a brief period of respite dawned on Poznań. Its duration was brief indeed. Bismarck was then coming to the front of the political stage. His programme was the unification of Germany by fire and blood and especially by a common hatred of common foes. When, after the wars against Denmark (1864), Austria (1866), and France (1870), there were no foreign enemies left, he began to harass foreigners at home. First of all he attacked Catholicism and the Poles. Against the latter Bismarck's policy rested on collaboration with Russia. Already at the time of the insurrection (1863) he had concluded a secret military compact with Russia; at the same time he persecuted the insurgents of the Kingdom through the intermediary of St. Petersburg. Although this cooperation with Russia was disapproved by the German liberals, who were in the majority at the Landtag, Bismarck remained the master of the situation, and after the victorious wars with Austria and France, the liberals came to swell the ranks of the government party in parliament. By the *Kulturkampf* the chancellor succeeded in strengthening their allegiance. This war on Catholicism struck at the same time the Poles who are nearly all Catholics. The *Kulturkampf* was inaugurated in 1871 by the suppression of the Catholic department at the ministry of Public Worship and of Instruction, on the pretext of its polo-

nizing tendencies. A number of laws (called the « May laws ») were promulgated, restricting the rights of the clergy, even those guaranteed by the constitution. Numerous penalties were inflicted on refractory ecclesiastics. They went even so far as to imprison Mgr Ledochowski, Archbishop of Poznan (4 February 1874) and to condemn him to banishment. Many parishes remained without priests. Poznan was given a German bishop. Exteriorly the conflict ended by a half-victory of Bismarck, but morally Rome triumphed. On the Polish population which was wholeheartedly Catholic, the struggle of the government against the Church, though a painful episode, was not without excellent consequences; it woke up the mass of the people and associated the ideas of patriotism and religion; it united the Catholic clergy to the opposition; it created a bond between all classes and hastened the revival in High-Silesia. Soon the name of Pole and socialist were linked in the war-cry of the followers of Bismarck. In 1872-1874, throughout the whole extent of the Polish territories, the primary and secondary schools were completely germanized and the Polish tongue banished from the courts of justice. When autonomous institutions were introduced in 1872-1875 the Grand Duchy of Poznan was excluded from this privilege.

The personal « rapprochement » of William I with Alexander III (meeting of the three emperors at Skierniewice in 1884) was the signal for an increase of persecution against the Poles. In 1885 Bismarck brutally expelled from Poznan 40,000 Polish subjects of foreign powers. Among these exiles were people long settled in Poznan, children, orphans. In the following year Bismarck made the Landtag of Prussia (April 26th) pass the law for the interior colonization (i. e. by Germans) of the Grand Duchy and Western Prussia. A special com-

mission (Ansiedlungskommission), with a first capital of 100 million marks, furnished by the Treasury, later increased by subsidies to 400 million marks, was entrusted with this colonization. Besides these colonizing funds, important sums were consecrated to extending and consolidating great German estates in the Polish territories; thus, for example, 150 millions were given for the buying of forests and domains, 350 millions as subsidies to German landed property and so on, so that in 1914 1055 million marks had been devoted to ousting the Poles from their lands. There was no question of augmenting the German element in the Marches, for this had considerably increased during the course of the XIXth century, and no Polish rising was now to be feared there. The overt aim of the government was to annihilate Polish landed property, and in consequence uproot the Polish population itself, according to the motto of the philosopher Edward Hartmann : « ausrotten ». The names of towns and villages were germanized; Polish schoolmasters and functionaries transferred to the most distant parts of Prussia; the Germans who did not show enough zeal in the work of germanization had the same fate. For the zealous ones, on the contrary, additional pay was forthcoming (Ostmarkenzulagen). The teaching of Polish was completely suppressed in the schools; even the catechism had to be learnt in German. In vain the Polish deputies at the Prussian Landtag and at the Reichstag protested vehemently against this violation of the historic rights of the Polish nation. In vain they appealed to the stipulations of the Treaty of Vienna, to the promises, to the solemn pledges of the Prussian kings. Bismarck said they were worthless («keinen Pfifferling wert», «not worth a straw»).

Count Caprivi, who succeeded the Iron Chancellor, fol-

lowed for four years a policy somewhat less hostile towards the Poles, an action due in part to the efforts of Joseph Koscielski, a Pole. The season-workers of the Kingdom of Poland and of Galicia were allowed free access to Poznan, though, it is true, this was even more to the advantage of the German agrarians than of the Poles. The Unions of Cooperative Societies were allowed to have their own inspector, instead of those hitherto imposed by government. A Pole, Mgr Stablewski, became Archbishop of Poznan (1891); elementary schoolmasters were allowed to give private lessons in Polish; the catechism was allowed to be taught in Polish in places where the children did not know German well, finally, writing and reading lessons in Polish were allowed in secondary schools, but only in so far as this was required for the study of religious subjects. The government, though pretending to seek «conciliation» did not go farther than these very minor concessions. And even so, the concession with regard to catechism was not long observed, which resulted in the sad business of Wrzesnia (1901). The children of this little town, obeying the orders of their parents, had refused to answer in German during the religious lesson. The teacher, in order to break down their opposition, whipped the children, boys and girls. Naturally the parents were not insensible to the cries of their offspring; but those who were daring enough to express their indignation openly were dragged before the tribunal and condemned to heavy penalties. Notwithstanding the emotion aroused in the civilized world by this affair, the government persisted in its policy. In consequence a few years later (1906-1907) the Polish children protested against the germanizing of their religious lessons by a giant strike which lasted eight months and comprised more than 100.000 scholars. The state of

things was scarcely better in the secondary schools. Polish schoolboys were punished for having studied the Polish language and literature in private meetings, these subjects being banished from the public curriculum (Torun trial of 1901).

*At this period, not only the German government, but also the German population, even outside the limits of Prussia, were taking part in the extermination campaign against the Poles and Polish ideas.* The seeds sowed by Flotwell and Bismarck were bearing fruit. The German sympathy for the Poles which had been manifested in 1831 and 1848 was now completely uprooted. Even those who represented the ideas of the old liberals had rallied to the programme of germanization of the Polish regions, the only one which, in their eyes, could secure the well-being and the greatness of Germany. In the month of September 1894 a mass of German pilgrims from Poznan and elsewhere, alarmed by the new « conciliation », flocked to the feet of Bismarck to complain of the imminent Polish peril. Conquered by the eloquence of the ex-chancellor, Hansemann, Kennemann and Tiedemann founded the famous defence Society of the Eastern Marches (Ostmarkverein<sup>1</sup>). This society threw out ramifications into all parts of Germany where it numbers tens of thousands of adherents; it stirs up men's minds with the spectre of imaginary perils which are supposed to threaten the frontiers of the empire, floods Germany with pamphlets and flying sheets and denounces what it calls the Great Polish Agitation (« grosspolnische Agitation »), which is but another name for the despairing resistance of the Poznanians. It terrorizes the functionaries who are not

<sup>1</sup> The current of ideas which this society represents is called in Poland Hakatism, a word formed from the initials of the three founders of the Ostmarkverein (H-K-T).



dead to all sense of justice to the Poles, creates financial institutions (Landbank 1805) to help on the work of the Colonization Commission, excludes the Poles by its influence from profiting by the law on redeemable lands, urges the post-office to pursue with its chicaneries those who address their letters in Polish, and so on. In a word, it is a sower of discord and hate over all the Polish territories. These tendencies have also an echo in parliamentary life. Even the radicals sometimes countenance anti-Polish policy by lending their votes to it. In the Evangelical Church and even in the Catholic body of Germany the spirit of germanization is spreading more and more. The confirmation in Polish for the Protestants has been suppressed; in the Catholic dioceses of Chelmno (Culm), of Warmie and of Wroclaw (Breslau), where bishops and chapters are German, as well as among the Polish population of Berlin and Westphalia, it is forbidden to preach in Polish or to teach the children their catechism in Polish. Under the chancellorship of Hohenlohe (1894-1900) and Bulow (1900-1909) the hakatists inaugurated new measures to denationalize the Poles. At the Prussian Landtag they caused to be passed, in 1904, the law called «law of establishment» rendering the foundation of smaller agricultural concerns quite impossible for the Poles and, on March 20th 1908, the law of expropriation which could be applied at the will and pleasure of the administration to any Polish landowner they chose. Finally on May 15th 1908, the German parliament while adopting a new *law*, which was fairly liberal, *on associations and public meetings*, made draconic regulations concerning the use of the Polish tongue. It is absolutely forbidden to use it in meetings that take place in districts having less than 60 % of Poles. After the fall of Bulow, the chancellor Bethmann-Hollweg, finding the existing

law of exception sufficient, did not put into execution the *law of expropriation*. The chancellor and the conservatives were beginning to be anxious about the very principle of private property, and they hoped that the law of March 20th 1908 would suffice to create a panic among the Poles and would paralyze their defensive. But the hakatists were far from being satisfied. Besides new credits voted for the Colonization Commission (1913), or destined to consolidate the smaller German property (1912); besides the forced sale of four great Polish estates (autumn 1912), they instigated the government to lay before the Prussian Landtag, in February 1914, a new project of anti-Polish legislation, the *allotment law*. While the Germans were convinced that the expropriations had roused the indignation of the Poles and even to some extent of German and of European public opinion, they saw that they had not interrupted the progress of parcellation of the great estates into small Polish holdings, which were the stronghold of Polish vitality and action. The new law was so worded as to allow the government to forbid parcellation in any given case, and give the State the right of preemption on estates that were for sale. The war of 1914 interrupted the labours of the Landtag and the law remained a project.

## IV

### Profit and loss

It is incontestable that the extermination policy of the Prussian government has had disastrous results for the Poles. By the very nature of things it is in the frontier regions that the situation is the worst. In Pomerania, in Kashoubia, which have been for centuries under German influence, hardly a tenth of the great estates are in Polish hands. The small towns, such as Tczew, Puck, Starograd, are being germanized with a surprising rapidity. This is due especially to the Prussian school and the German clergy. The same influences are at work in Warmia. The state of things is still worse among the Mazurs where the protestant population is openly denationalized.

No doubt matters have improved during the last few years. German oppression unites and gives spirit to the natives of the Polish Marches, who feel that their very existence is menaced. A sufficient proof of this will be found in the rise of a Polish intellectual class among the Kashoubs, where formerly the only lettered persons were German. In High Silesia, throughout that ancient patrimony of the Piasts which seemed lost for ever to Poland, there are signs of a new birth, of a Polish revival. At the election of 1907, Silesia sent five Polish deputies to the Reichstag. It would nevertheless be premature to speak of the triumph of Polish efforts, for the German hand still lies heavy on the land. The government, the German industries, the German clergy, all vie with each other to implant German culture. The infant-schools, the reading-

rooms, the schools, the army are powerful means of propagation for the German language. And so, though in Silesia generally the increase of the Polish population is at present more rapid than that of the Germans (1890-1910, 27 %, 23 as against 21,5 %), nevertheless, in the chief centre of Polish life, the regency of Opole, the German element is gaining ground.

But it is not only in the Marches that Polish losses are remarkable. The Germans are driving back the Polish element towards the eastern frontiers. In the western districts of Poznanian the great Polish estates are on the decline, whilst Polish industry and commerce find it hard to maintain their position. Certain towns, Gniezno for example, have become mere islets in a German ocean; others have lost their Polish character. Intellectual creative work is weakening in Poznanian in the unfavourable atmosphere of a fierce economic struggle with a rich and all-powerful government. But the germanizing policy is a two-edged sword: unlimited favour has demoralized the German settlers themselves; a number of German spendthrifts and adventurers have found a harbour of refuge in the Bismarckian Commission. The land has acquired such an increased value and reached such a fancy price that German farmers no longer find it remunerative. Thanks to this state of things, and thanks also to their deep attachment to their native soil, the Poles have managed to buy more land from private German owners than they have surrendered to the Commission. The birth-rate of the Poles being superior to that of the Germans, the native population has been gaining slightly on the immigrants. On the other hand, the mere fact of living in a country which has reached a high degree of technical knowledge in agriculture, in a State which unlike Russia enjoys constitutional govern-

ment and makes the organization of social associations possible, has contributed not a little to the economic prosperity of the country. It has also aided in developing social solidarity among the people. Democratic ideas have taken deep root and manifest themselves by a wide extension of the Polish popular press. Peasant and citizen vie with the great landlords, and they have often even distanced them, in the defence of the national heritage. Forced to count only upon themselves, the Poles have learnt to help each other, to group themselves into corporations (Cooperative Societies, agricultural Clubs, Land Bank, Industrial Bank, founded in 1861, Society of popular Reading-rooms, etc.).

More perhaps than any other section of the community, the Polish population of Prussian Poland has found new strength and energy in the struggle for life. Its bonds of solidarity have been tightened, its consciousness of national unity has been deepened, thus laying the secure foundations of a better future.

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# The Poles under the domination of Austria (1815-1914)

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The present Galicia, which was once the most unfortunate of the three fractions of mutilated Poland, has enjoyed for the past fifty years a degree of political freedom which the two other sections are far from having attained. Nevertheless the several parts of this country have had very different destinies.

## I

### The "Free Republic of Cracow,,

It was only from 1795 to 1809 and from 1846 to 1860 that the oppression of the Austrian domination weighed directly upon the old city of Cracow. The Congress of Vienna had made of this city and its environs (about 390 sq. miles, with 95.000 inhab.) an independent republic where, in Alexander the First's idea, Polish civilization was to find an opportunity of developing freely. The three co-partitioning States had undertaken to protect the free working of the rather clumsy and complicated constitutional system which had been assigned to this tiny fragment of Poland. The government was composed of a president with a senate of twelve, chosen by election, and



a Chamber of deputies. It was in the election of the latter that delegations from the peasant class were, for the first time in the history of Poland, called upon to cooperate. Russia, Austria and Prussia maintained residents in Cracow whose control was exercised in such a way as to paralyze the action of the nascent republic. Acting in concert with Nowosiltzew, the « conservator » of the University, the residents directed their efforts principally to defeating political « machinations ». They cancelled the decrees of the Chamber of deputies, suspended the constitution (1828), and usurping the power, shared it with a few Russophil senators. Far from agreeing upon the future which was to be reserved for the tottering commonwealth, they poisoned by their quarrels the interior life of the country, which was already a prey to constant petty dissensions. The primary object aimed at by the senate and its president Wodzicki, at the instigation of Russia, was reunion with the Kingdom of Poland. The chamber of deputies and the people opposed it. incited thereto by the Austrians and Germans. After the insurrection of November 1830 the Russians seized the town and drove out the *émigrés* who had taken refuge there. In March 1833 the constitution was modified in the sense of restrictions to the liberty of the press and to the choice of a president for the Senate. His election had now to be confirmed by the courts of the three protecting powers. These measures having proved insufficient to rid the city of the *émigrés*, it was once more occupied three years later and constitutional rights again curtailed. A third occupation, purely Austrian, lasted from 1838 to 1841. A fourth, whose object was to disperse the revolutionary government which was forming in February 1846, had to give way, at first, before the insurrection. But a little later, on November 6th of the same year,

Austria formally annexed Cracow, with the consent of Russia and Prussia and in spite of the protestations of England and France, which justified their opposition by appealing to the stipulations of the Congress of Vienna.

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## II

### The Oppression in Galicia

Amongst the other districts of Galicia, the region of Tarnopol was for several years (1809-1815) the object of attempts at russification. The rest of the country on both sides of the river San never had a moment's respite from the stifling pressure of the government of Vienna. False hopes were raised once or twice which caused a momentary elation. But they were invariably followed by bitter disappointment (1805, 1807, 1809). No good results were ever obtained from the Education Commission or from the Four Years' Diet. After the harsh rule of Joseph came the relentless government of Francis, «*der gute Kaiser Franz*», the sly, canting despot in whose iron grasp Galicia was ground to powder. By letters patent of April 13th 1817 he restored the ancient «*postulatory*» Diet, henceforth called Diet of the Estates, that is of the magnates, the nobles, the clergy and the burghers. This Diet was entrusted with the assessment of taxes and was allowed to present humble and ineffective petitions to the sovereign. It was in vain that it solicited the creation of a bank for the region, of a faculty of medicine at the university of Lwow, and asked for the lowering of the price of salt which

was a government monopoly, or an abatement in the land tax, which was sixteen times heavier than in the neighbouring Kingdom of Poland. Galicia was considered by Austria as a foreign colony, as a market for home-produce, and the State budget provided no funds for improving communications, aiding its agriculture, trade or industries, for education, sanitation, or for any public building, save barracks and prisons. Latin was paramount in the restored university of Lwow (1817), and soon German was, in part, substituted for it. The German language and a German staff were supreme in the schools and seminaries; the censor ruthlessly blotted out the very names of Pole and Poland from the text-books. The Kingdom of Galicia and Lodomeria (to which, for a time, was added Bukovina) was in the hands of governors such as the old fossil clerk Hauer, or the man of fashion Taffe, or Lobkowitz, who each and all blindly obeyed the orders from Vienna, absolutely disregarded the needs of the population, and were good for nothing but sowing discord between noble and peasant, between Ruthenians and Poles.

In Galicia, as elsewhere, it was chiefly after 1831 that the situation became intolerable. The excitement and the hopes raised for a moment by the Viennese government, to the great chagrin of Nicholas I, were followed by deep dejection. Jobbers, upstarts, nobles of recent creation, who had been enriched by the economic crisis of the Napoleonic period, were the only ones who grew fat amid the inaction and torpor of all classes of the people under the shadow of the police of this « paternal » government. From time to time there were rumours of plots (carbonari, Polish societies) to which were joined the plans for a great emigration. But the prisons of Metternich soon got the better of all these plots. At that

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time (1832-1846) the nominal ruler was the archduke Ferdinand of Este, the real one Baron Krieg, the head of the presidential Office.

Towards 1840 the country gave signs of awakening from this lethargy and beginning a new life. This was doubtless due in part to the influence of Polish emigrants, established in France, but also in a considerable degree to men of letters such as Vincent Pol, Fredo, Szajnocha and Bielowski.

The Diet succeeded in obtaining the creation of the Land Credit Society (1841), of the Galician Savings Bank (1843), of the Polytechnic School of Lwow (1844). What was even more important, it undertook the settlement of the agrarian question, that is to say, of the emancipation of the peasants, by the liquidation of the seigniorial dues on the one hand, and of the peasant liabilities on the other (1845). To this effect special commissions were instituted in 1845.

It was precisely at this juncture that the great plan of insurrection of the Central Committees in Paris failed.

On January 18th 1846, a national government had been formed in Cracow. The Austrian administration stirred up against the dictators of Cracow the mass of the peasants who had been worked up for some time by its emissaries, and from the 19th to the 22nd of February a peasant-rising carried death and destruction into the districts of Bochnia, Jaslo, Nowy Sacz and Sanok. Several thousands of persons were thus massacred, and not only were the authors of these crimes unpunished, but the assassins and their instigators, such as Krieg, Breindel, Berndt, and the peasant Szela, were rewarded. On November, 11th. the «Grand Duchy of Cracow», which had just been occupied, was incorporated with Galicia. On July 31st 1847 the democratic emissaries, Wisniowski and Kapuscinski, were

sent to the gallows. The bureaucrat reaction, which was but another form of anarchy, went on with its work of revenge. Suddenly a breath of freedom blew from Paris, and in the middle of March 1848, upset all the edifice constructed by Metternich. This gave new life to Polish hearts. At Lwow and Cracow civic committees were formed, guarantees were asked for the national rights of Poles, the reform of the Constitution of the Estates was insisted upon, as well as compulsory and free education, the filling of all public offices by people of the country, the commissioning of Polish officers to command the troops in Galicia, and so on. The governor, Count Louis Stadion, thought it necessary to enlist the services of natives of the country and named an auxiliary Council (Beirat) of Galicians. The nobility, following the general movement, proposed the abolition of statute-labour and had decided to bring it about on April 22d or May 3rd. But the government at Vienna, not wanting to be deprived of the glory of this measure, took the initiative, and the Emperor Ferdinand himself declared statute-labour abolished on the 17th of April.

Nevertheless, once again the arsenal of oppression at Vienna was called upon to furnish arms against this movement of regeneration which was extending to the whole of Austria. Cracow was bombarded, the Slav congress at Prague was dispersed by armed force (June 12th), and for the first time in history a general council of Ruthenians was arranged against the Poles and convoked at Lwow, thus transferring from the domain of religion and education into that of politics the question of the Ruthenian nationality which had hitherto been one with the Poles.

The constitution of April, granted by the Emperor Ferdinand and securing to all his people the inviolability of their language and nationality was. a few months later



(in October), drowned in rivers of blood. After the suppression of the insurrection of Vienna came the bombardment of Lwow (Nov. 2). The Poles, turning away for a time from the panslavist aspirations of Prague, but remaining ever champions of the cause of freedom in Europe as in Austria, hastened to enlist under the flag of Garibaldi in Italy (Chrzanowski, Chodzko, Fijalkowski), as well as in the ranks of the revolted Magyars. Under the leadership of Wysocki, of Debinski, of Bem (Transylvanian campaign) they fought from December 1848 to August 1849 and once more covered themselves with glory. The czar Nicholas supported Francis Joseph with his armies, and the Hungarian rising was quelled. Bem's comrades in arms took refuge in Asia Minor.

### III

## The Renaissance of Galicia

Their success in Hungary gave renewed boldness to the absolutists in Austria and the breath of reaction was again felt in the public life of Galicia. In spite of the law of 1849 the germanizing policy was once more vigorously to the fore in every department of education. The university lectures were again severely and closely watched, the most eminent professors in the university of the Jagellons were dismissed. However the lieutenant-governor, count Agenor Goluchowski (1849-1859), under the ministries of Windischgraetz and Back, defended Galicia against the intrigues of the reactionaries. Under the appearances of a skilful bureaucrat and a strict



observer of the letter of the law, this high functionary was not only an excellent administrator but a broad-minded and far-seeing statesman. He foresaw that the centralizing and germanizing tendencies could not long subsist in Austria, and he was wise enough to encourage the Poles to accept provisionally posts in the Viennese government, while he was devoting all his efforts to restoring the economic life of the country, and to opposing and foiling the plan which had been set on foot of dividing Galicia into a Ruthenian and a Polish region. This plan, as a matter of fact, would have done incalculable harm to the Poles, without being of serious advantage to the Ruthenians. Henceforth Vienna no longer plays the part of a harsh stepmother to Galicia.

After the unsuccessful campaign of Italy (1859) the post of foreign secretary in the Monarchy was offered to Goluchowski. In 1860 he promulgated what is called the October Diploma which laid the foundations of constitutional government in Austria. By this Diploma a large field of action in legislative matters was opened to the Diets of the provinces and their autonomy was largely secured.

But the partisans of a centralizing policy soon overthrew Goluchowski and raised Schmerling to power, whilst Francis Joseph, by letters patent of the 26 February 1861, considerably restricted the rights granted by the October Diploma. However this new democratic but centralist constitution did not prevent the Diet of Galicia from being organized on the elective principle. The first Galician Diet, while sending some of its members as delegates to the Vienna parliament, at the same time passed a resolution reserving to itself the settling of all Polish questions in the Monarchy. Whilst patiently awaiting the end of the Schmerling administration, measures were

taken to carry out the programme of the autonomist party. In the memorable session which lasted from November 23rd 1865 to Easter 1866, on the eve of war with Prussia, the Diet gave expression to the needs and wishes of the Poles. The schools, the administration of justice were to be Polish; the Diet was to have the legislative power in educational matters; a special minister was to represent Galicia; legal procedure was to be simplified; the demoralizing right of retailing liquor, which was the exclusive privilege of great landowners, was to be abolished and an indemnity granted to the landlords, and so on. Vienna gave a favourable ear to the expression of these desiderata, coming as they did after the disaster of Sadowa which had dealt a terrible blow to the Monarchy. On the other hand, the Diet, in its sitting of December 10th 1866, gave clear expression to its loyalty to the dynasty in these words: «Sire, we are faithful to you and are determined to remain so.»

The convention of Beust with Hungary (February 27th 1867), it is true, went no farther than establishing Dualism instead of a general decentralization, but at least it granted to the Diets a part of the powers which they had solicited. Goluchowski, nominated once more to the post of lieutenant-governor, purged the administration of unnecessary or even pernicious foreigners who encumbered it and introduced the Polish language (1867); in 1868 Polish and Ruthenian were allowed to be used in the courts of justice; from 1867 onward the Higher Education Board, composed of members of the Diet, assumed control of Polish secondary education. These were, however, but half-victories; the autonomy or self-government scarcely deserved its name, deprived as it was of the executive power; and the rights of the Polish language, which were not the outcome of constitutional

law but of personal decrees of the emperor; were exposed to peril from any political change in the monarchy.

It was feared, however, that the autonomist principles would be weakened in the contact with the central representation of the Austrian nationalities, and in consequence the home rule movement took on an ever greater extension in Galicia. It found expression in a proposal of Fr. Smolka. In consideration for the more immediate advantage of the country, and for fear of seeing the Diet dissolved, the Poles did not refuse to attend the Reichsrat in 1867, but by a «resolution» of the Diet, voted on September 24th 1868 on the initiative of Ziemiakowski, they claimed an extension of the rights of the Galician Diet, especially in the matter of financial resources. They asked to have a chancellor or responsible minister put at the head of the government in the country, and a special court of appeal at the head of its judicial administration. The Galician «resolution» was not submitted to the Vienna parliament: in the words of Francis Joseph «the efforts tending to grant to this Kingdom an autonomy in harmony with the unity and importance of the State have for the moment failed of their effect». In 1873 the adoption of a system of direct election to the Reichsrat, instead of the former method of sending delegates from the Diet, had, it is true, no very disastrous consequences for Galicia, but none the less it cut short the hopes of a wider autonomy, or at least made it practically impossible to attain. By the fundamental laws of December 21st 1867 concerning the organization of self-government in the country, the Diet assumed the character of a Curia and was, at the same time, chosen by the autonomous administrative committee. District-councils had been created in 1866. Later on the same legislative authority introduced local, urban and com-

munal self-government. As in former times, the central political power was exercised by a lieutenant-governor, who was not responsible to the Diet, was chief of the starosts and himself directly dependent on the ministry. No human society which has had for centuries a civilization of its own can ever be happy or contribute to the happiness of the greater state of which it forms an essential part, unless it is under a governor of its own. This principle however was not fully recognized, and it is to the insufficient comprehension of this universal rule that must be attributed the difficulties and friction which arose later. Moreover, not to mention the centralizing tendencies which are inevitable in a Monarchy composed of such diverse races, two factors contributed to a favourable solution of the Polish question in Austria; first of all, the personal attitude of Francis Joseph, and secondly the prudent, clear-sighted and judicious policy of the Polish leaders of this and of the subsequent period. Marshals (i. e. presidents), of the Diet, such as Leo Sapieha (1861-1875), Nicholas Zybkiewicz (1881-1886), Stanislas Badeni (1895-1913), parliamentary men, such as the democrats Francis Smolka, first president of the Reichsrat, Ziemiałkowski, conservatives like Adam Potocki, George Lubomirski, Paul Popiel, Casimir Grocholski, Apollinarius Jaworski, lieutenant-governors like Alfred Potocki (1875-1883), Casimir Badeni (1888-1895), Andrew Potocki (1903-1908), suffice to give the lie, by their brilliant activity, to the contemptuous epithets which were unjustly showered upon « Polnische Wirtschaft » (Polish administration); and Treasury ministers such as Dunajewski (1880-1891), Bilinski (1895-1897), Korytowski (1906), Zaleski (1913) succeeded more than once in restoring and consolidating Austria's financial situation.

In time the labours of the Diet of Galicia came to embrace a vast field of action. The country was covered with a close network of railways and roads. The educational programme, which aimed at giving each commune (parish) a schoolhouse, was almost completely executed, the number of public schools and training schools increased rapidly. An Academy of sciences was founded in Cracow (1872). The university of Lwow, into which Polish had been introduced since 1862 as a teaching language, was enriched with a faculty of medicine (1894), that of Cracow with an institute of agronomy. The waterways began to be corrected, lands to be improved. Attempts were made to redistribute small holdings that were too parcellated, rural credit was organized by means of the law on redeemable landed property (1905) and the creation of Raiffeisen savings banks (1899). Numerous hospitals were built. Side by side with the ancient Ossolinski Institute (reorganized in 1869) arose a mass of institutions and societies, scientific, literary and artistic; the People's Schools Society, generously supported by the whole population, waged successful war on ignorance and infused instruction into the lowest ranks of the people. More and more members of the lower classes took a share in the intellectual progress of the country. Agriculture abandoned routine methods, thanks to the efforts of three agricultural societies whose aim was to regulate cattle-breeding, to propagate technical knowledge and to organize agricultural trade. Agricultural clubs took shape and multiplied, as well as rural cooperative societies, village warehouses, housekeeping and cookery schools. Galicia, once so poverty-stricken and afflicted, learned to amass vast capital out of small savings laboriously accumulated penny by penny, and to apply this capital to the organization of sound Polish industrial undertakings.



The progress realized was enormous although it had to cope with great difficulties, for the Vienna centralizing party would not open their eyes to the necessity for the state of an evolution on federalistic lines, and were incapable of harmonizing the divergent tendencies of the several nationalities, which made it almost impossible for the parliament to devote itself to useful labours. Ministers of the centralizing tendency, especially Koerber, only profited by the situation to introduce a system of disguised absolutism, based upon the famous 14th article of the fundamental laws. This state of things was combated by the Polish parliamentary club which nevertheless represented an essentially conservative and conciliating policy. It succeeded at times in reviving the parliament and inspiring it momentarily with the life and energy necessary for fruitful action. The successive presidents of the club Jaworski, Dzieduszycki, Glabinski, directed all their efforts to this object. Glabinski had been charged by all parties in the Reichsrat with the task of purifying parliamentary conditions, and his proposed reform of parliamentary regulations received the complete approval of the House. Nevertheless, the efforts of the Club only obtained an ephemeral success; they failed to restore harmony in the parliament, or to rouse it from its fatal lethargy. Meanwhile the Diet of Galicia, on the contrary, was doing much good and useful work to the great chagrin of the Vienna centralizers. Accordingly, the latter redoubled their efforts to injure Galicia from the economic point of view, to curtail its budget and reduce the most necessary expenses. In order to satisfy the most crying needs of the country, such as the state purchase of the northern railway of Galicia, the construction of canals, the creation of a School of Mines, the Diet had to battle for years before it could triumph over the obstinacy of the central

government, which carried their malevolence so far as to refuse to put into execution the law for the construction of canals which had been voted and sanctioned.

It was in obedience to centralizing considerations that the State minister, Gautsch, extended universal suffrage to all the Monarchy in 1907. The Poles profited by this reform to increase the Diet's jurisdiction in civil and penal matters. But this was all it could accomplish, for the central government found something to oppose to the aims of the Poles at emancipation, and this was the « Ukrainian Nation ».

The Polish parties had always endeavoured to satisfy the intellectual needs and the national culture of the Ruthenians, wherever such needs showed themselves. Proofs of this may be found in the Ruthenian upper schools opened in eastern Galicia, in the thousands of Ruthenian elementary schools, in the equal status of the two languages in the training-schools of the east, in the introduction of Ruthenian as an official language in district-councils wherever the communes asked for it (1907), in the creation of numerous Ruthenian chairs at the university of Lwow, in the granting of large subsidies to the Ruthenians for national institutions of every sort. All Polish parties recognize the right of Ruthenians to possess a university of their own, though the majority are opposed to the division of the university of Lwow into two separate sections, one Ruthenian and one Polish. But all this was not enough to soften the hostility of the Ukrainian party, which is all-powerful among the Ruthenians. This party could not bring itself to acknowledge that a people, whose culture and political education was in its infancy, has still many efforts to make in raising itself to a higher level which would enable them to compete on equal terms with the heirs of an ancient civilized country like Poland.

The aspirations of the Ukrainians, however, found eager partisans in Vienna, and in Berlin. Lieutenant-governor Andrew Potocki, who had attempted to oppose to the Ukrainians the more moderate Old-Ruthenian party, fell a victim to their enmity (April 12th 1908). The government, far from realizing the disastrous consequences of a policy based on the old maxim of « divide et impera » made every effort to destroy the influence of the party of « national democracy » which had shown the greatest firmness in upholding Polish interests in the east of the country. After the frenzy of annexation in 1908-1909, it was essential, in case of a war with Russia, to gain over to the Austrian cause, not only the Ukrainians of Galicia, but the thirty millions of the same race across the border, who, it was pretended, shared their sentiments. With a view to the complete emancipation of Galicia, the Poles had obtained an increase of powers for the lieutenant-governor. Now Vienna used this extension of powers to manipulate in its own interests the parties in Galicia. Under violent pressure from the administrative authorities, the electors voted into the Polish party a majority of members entirely devoted to the government. This majority allowed it to reform the Diet in accordance with its own ideas. The Galician obstructionists, encouraged by the passive attitude of official organs, succeeded in bringing about an understanding with the parties grouped around what was called the « Polish block » with regard to the project of reform of the electoral status of the Diet. The Polish episcopate, followed by a great part of the nation, protested against this project which favoured excessive radicalism. In the Diet itself it was only approved by an insignificant majority. Finally, in the elections to the Diet in 1913, in which the opposition obtained a small majority, a compromise was arrived at with the Ruthe-

nians. The new electoral status gave to the Ruthenians 61 seats, out of 227, and two members of the autonomous administrative Committee out of 8. The absolute domination of the Polish element in Galicia was now at an end, as it no longer disposed of three quarters of the vote and could not, in consequence, modify the laws of the country without the consent of the Ruthenian minority.

# The Poles under the domination of Russia

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## I

### The "Kingdom of Poland" 1815-1831

The new Kingdom of Poland, raised on the ruins of the Duchy of Warsaw by the Congress of Vienna, was to constitute a separate State organization, linked with Russia by its constitution and having for its king the czar of Russia.

On the 27th of November 1815 the emperor Alexander I granted to the Kingdom a constitution drafted by Czartoryski, with some modifications suggested by another counsellor, Nowosiltzew.

There was a Senate and a Chamber of Deputies who were to meet twice yearly and whose sessions were to be public. The senators were chosen by the king among the candidates proposed by the Senate itself. In the second Chamber sat 77 deputies elected by the landed nobility and 51 chosen by copyholders who were non-noble landed proprietors, merchants, manufacturers, priests, artisans and men of other callings. Elections to the Chamber of Deputies took place every six years. The



executive was entrusted to an administrative council of five ministers who were presidents of the divers commissions. These were Education and Public Worship, Justice, Home Affairs and Police, War, Finance and Revenue. A sixth minister, with rank of secretary of State, was the official intermediary in Petersburg between the king and the government. In Warsaw the king was represented by a Lieutenant and a Council of State. Polish was the only official language in the administration, in the law-courts and in the army. Political rights were guaranteed, as well as the independence of the judges. The army (30.000 men) wore Polish emblems as a badge on their uniform. The white eagle « en abîme » on the imperial black eagle constituted the arms of the State. The whole constitution, notwithstanding traces of English or French influence, showed a marked tendency to carry on the traditions of independent Poland.

Save for the absence of municipal autonomy, this constitution was, as regards national guarantees and democratic and liberal principles, as satisfactory as could be expected at such a time. But all this was mere outward show; the conditions essential to ensure permanence were wanting. The little white eagle could not rest in the bosom of the great autocratic eagle, a wind of reaction disturbed its repose. Nor could public opinion forget the loss of Galicia and of the ancient Great Poland, the cradle of the race and its history. As for Lithuania, it was thought for a time that Alexander would unite it to the Kingdom: had he not made the clearest declarations on this head at the Congress of Vienna, had he not reserved in the very stipulation of the treaty the right to grant an « interior extension » of the boundaries of the Kingdom? And how many times had Alexander raised or revived the hopes of the Poles by vague allusions.

perhaps without having the courage... or the power, to fulfil them. Hence came much bitter disappointment. Meanwhile the conflict between Russian and Pole was becoming envenomed in Warsaw owing to the action of the two representatives of Russia, the grand duke Constantine, and Nowosiltzew. The grand duke Constantine, the brother of Alexander, had married a Pole, Jane Grudzinska (1820), and though arbitrary and autocratic, was not without some good qualities. He had been given dictatorial authority over the army in the Kingdom, and had in addition been made commander of the troops in Lithuania. This was considered, not without reason, as a presage of the union of the two territories. In reality Constantine carried his authority far beyond the sphere of military affairs. He governed the Kingdom like a despot without regard for justice or the constitution. It was all the more easy for him to assume this role as the post of lieutenant-governor was not given to Czartoryski, as had been expected, but to Joseph Zajaczek, who though formerly a radical and a Polish legionary, had become a reactionary and a passive instrument in the hands of the grand duke. It was in vain that Czartoryski complained to the czar, and the popular manifestations of horror, provoked by the degradation of the government, were equally without effect. The grand duke, by his arrogance and his vexations alienated the whole body of officers, drove several of Napoleon's old generals to resign and gained the name of an enemy of the constitution. It must be noted, however, that later, under Nicholas I, Constantine was more well-disposed towards the Kingdom and took its part in its contests with the empire.

Nevertheless, it was not the grand duke Constantine who exercised the most baleful influence in the relations between the two countries, but rather the imperial com-

missioner, Nicholas Nowosiltzew, the former protégé and friend of Czartoryski, who had become envious, perfidious and the mortal enemy of Poland. He was the soul of the secret police; never failing to denounce, as revolutionaries, the Poles who aspired to liberty, he strove to awaken the distrust of Alexander and to ruin the autonomy of the Kingdom. And there was, in truth, some cause for jealousy. The Polish nation, happy in the possession of a liberal regime had thrown itself heart and soul into the path of progress. In 1816 the university of Warsaw was inaugurated, and in a short time it contained faculties of theology, law, medicine, science and letters, as well as a school of Fine Art. Warsaw possessed also a polytechnic school, a military school and a school of forestry. At Kielce there was a school of mines, at Kalisz a military academy (cadets), at Lowicz a training-school for teachers. To these higher schools we may add the Protestant seminary, the Jewish training-school, ten secondary schools in the several voyvodies as well as sixteen upper primary schools and about 900 primary schools. The minister of Education, Stanislas Potocki, was the soul of the movement. Mostowski, minister of the Interior, restored public order and attended to public health and economic questions. He founded the agricultural school of Marymont; under his protection textile industries and handicrafts progressed; he built roads, corrected waterways, enlarged and embellished the towns. Staszic developed mining. But the finances of the State were far from being satisfactory. The great sacrifices which the napoleonic period had imposed on the Kingdom had exhausted the resources of the country to such an extent that the Finance minister, Matuszewicz, was unable to prevent a deficit. Nowosiltzew immediately suggested to Alexander doubts as to the capacity of the Kingdom

for managing its own money affairs. It was in this difficult pass that Xavier Lubecki was, in 1821, put at the head of this department, and he not only succeeded in averting the dangers that threatened the autonomy of the country, but even put the finances of the state in a flourishing condition by measures which were so strong as to border on tyranny. This was for the Kingdom the first step in a magnificent economic expansion. In 1828 Lubecki created the Bank of Poland in order to encourage agriculture and industries; he had already, in 1825, founded the Land Credit Society to consolidate landed property which had suffered from the trials the country had gone through. The Kingdom formed commercial connections with France and England, the machine industry gains ground and the linen industry becomes prosperous; the canal of the Narew and Niemen is constructed and so on.

## II

### The Revolution of 1830-1831

Whilst material prosperity was increasing on the banks of the Vistula, threatening clouds of reaction began to gather about this centre of constitutionalism. The shade of Metternich and of his congresses was hovering over the Kingdom of Poland. In 1819 the censorship was introduced without any sufficient reason and quite illegally, if we consider the Constitution; the secrecy of correspondence was violated and personal liberty ceased to exist. Suspected persons were condemned without trial

to ignominious penalties. Alexander, and still more his successor Nicholas, < delayed > the opening of Diets. In fifteen years, only four were held instead of seven or eight. By a decree added to the Constitution (13th February 1825) the public character of the sittings was abolished. Stanislas Potocki, who was not in favour with churchmen because he had closed the convents and was a free-thinker, resigned in 1821, under pressure from the clergy. His successor Grabowski, complying with the requirements of Nowosiltzew, destroyed the work of Potocki and put a gag on literature and the press. In 1823 Nowosiltzew discovered in Wilno secret societies of students, who under the name of *Philomaths* and *Philarets* devoted themselves exclusively to literary and moral objects. He exaggerated the importance of the affair and endeavoured to give it the character of a serious political conspiracy.

The imperial promise to unite Wilno, Grodno, Minsk, Volhynia and Podolia to the Kingdom of Poland was becoming more and more illusory. Under the circumstances it was becoming extremely difficult to defend the rights of the nation and to ensure the observation of the established legal order. Notwithstanding the encroachments of the authorities and the repeated violations of constitutional rights the Diet observed the greatest moderation and only once went so far as to criticize, with a certain asperity, these unconstitutional measures (1820). It contented itself, like the national opposition, with defending the Constitution and fundamental rights. At the administrative Council it was especially Lubecki who checked the machinations of Nowosiltzew and the reactionary party. It was to this minister that the Council owed, in 1825, a brilliant moral success, in the affair of the public debates at the bar of the Diet touching the



participation of Poles in the conspiracy of the Russian « Decabrists ». This trial, in spite of threats pronounced and the pitfalls laid by the grand duke Constantine (imprisoning of judges, interdiction to publish the verdict), was conducted in accordance with the principles of the Constitution. After the death of Alexander I, legal defence of liberty was more and more fettered; the government treated the Constitution, not as a contract binding the king as well as the nation, but as a simple favour coming from the tzar of Russia. Henceforth, the defence of national rights, little by little, quitted the public platforms and took refuge in the bosom of secret societies. Freemasonry organized the first of these patriotic associations. It had been long in existence, and, at the period of the Duchy, was under the direction of Berlin. Universal freemasonry gave birth, not without Alexander I's knowledge, to a national freemasonry based on loyalist monarchical principles, but tending to Pan-Polish ideas. Valerian Lukasinski was its grand master. Besides this society, and independent of it, arose a national patriotic league with the same Lukasinski at its head. Its aim was to unite the three fractions of Poland into one free and independent State. The dauntless chief of this association, Lukasinski, fell a victim to treachery, was tried in violation of the Constitution and spent forty-four years in the prisons of Schlüsselbourg, where he died in 1868, without having betrayed his secret. His successors opened negotiations very cautiously with the Russian revolutionaries (Decabrists), but they were brought up for trial before the Diet when their prospective fellow-conspirators were arrested and revealed the plot. The wise clemency of the Diet was vain; it was too late to reconcile the conspirators with Nicholas I. A new plot was already brewing in the army when the rumour spread that the Po-

lish troops were going to be sent to quell the insurrection in France and Belgium. This project of the tzar's provoked an outburst of complaints among the soldiery who felt that they were created to defend the liberties of Poland, and not to combat the freedom of other peoples. The revolution broke out : on the 29th of November 1830, the military cadets made an attempt on the life of the grand duke Constantine in the Belvedere Palace.

All the people were not ready for a revolution. The moderate party wanted the insurgents to content themselves with claiming Lithuania and the grant of constitutional rights. The grand duke Constantine and the Russian regiments were allowed to escape scot-free. The national government, hastily constituted amid the general disorder, hoped for a time that it might negotiate with the imperial government, whilst on the contrary Petersburg required complete submission. It was only after the convocation of the Diet that the extreme parties got the upper hand and proclaimed, in the sitting of January 25th 1831, the deposition of Nicholas. But the insurgents were without a leader. What such vacillating dictators as Chlopicki, Skrzynecki, Krukowiecki were unable to do, could not be repaired later by the clever strategy of their lieutenant-general Pradzynski, or by the valour of Dembinski and Dwernicki. Instead of conducting a rapid and vigorous offensive towards the east, they allowed the enemy to approach until they were under the walls of Warsaw. In the great battle of Grochow (25th February) the Russian army of Diebitsch lost, it is true, its victorious start; there were even after that a series of successful encounters for the Polish arms near Waver, Demby Wielkie and Iganie, but the campaign of Lithuania and Volhynia was undertaken too late and with insufficient forces. On the 26th of May, Skrzynecki experienced at Ostrolenka a defeat

which opened for the enemy the road to Warsaw. On September 6th and 7th, prince Paskiewicz stormed Wola, a suburb of Warsaw; the capital surrendered and the remnants of the Polish army threw down their arms on Prussian territory.

The constitutional Powers of Western Europe looked on for nine months as friendly but inactive spectators. Austria, the rival of Russia in the East, was not sorry to see the difficulties which the Polish question was causing Nicholas, but when the tzar was actually deposed, it did not dare to support the insurrection. Prussia furnished arms to the Russians and allowed them to pursue their enemy even on Prussian territory. Liberal England (Grey, Palmerston) was in the throes of the Reform Bill and had no leisure to interfere in the Polish question. It was only after the catastrophe that the Cabinets of Paris and London protested at Petersburg and reminded Russia of the international promise to guarantee the autonomy of the Kingdom of Poland. Nicholas I replied by a refusal to allow Europe any right of interference in Russo-Polish affairs, but in order to give some satisfaction to the complaints of western liberals, he granted to the Kingdom, on February 24th 1832, the *Organic Statute*, which instituted a Council of State, councils of Voyvodies and municipal Councils, etc., re-introduced Polish into the administration and the law-courts and guaranteed the liberty of the subject. As a matter of fact, this Organic Statute was never carried into effect. It suppressed more than it promised; the coronation of the king was no longer to take place, the Chamber of Deputies and the national army were dissolved.

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### III

## Post-revolutionary Reaction

The nation was subjected to terrible reprisals. The national army and the War Commission were dissolved, the senate and the Chamber of Deputies suppressed. The Society of the Friends of Science was closed (April 18th 1832), as well as the university of Warsaw (April 15th), and their libraries were carried off to St. Petersburg. An amnesty was published for the ear of Europe, but its real outcome was the incorporation, for many years, of the thousands of Polish soldiers who returned to the country, with the Russian army. The Kingdom was punished by a further military conscription of 20.000 men.

Orphan boys of the age of seven to sixteen, as well as waifs and strays, were sent to form part of the battalions of Minsk in order to be russified (March 24th 1834). A special tribunal, pronounced (Sept. 16th 1834) 286 death-sentences on notable patriots. Amongst others, prince Adam Czartoryski and the famous historian, J. Lelewel, were condemned by default. A ukase of July 10th 1835 confiscated the property of 2340 émigrés who had failed to avail themselves of the amnesty. A part of these lands were distributed to Russians who had distinguished themselves by anti-Polish zeal. A fortress was built at the gates of Warsaw, which became the dungeon for patriots and revolutionaries. On his first visit to Warsaw the czar Nicholas answered a petition of the Poles in the following words: « On the least sign of revolt I shall bom-

bard the town and reduce Warsaw to a heap of ruins, and you may be sure I shall not rebuild it. »

At the head of the government there remained, pro forma, an administrative Council under the presidency of the privy-councillor Engel. This council was converted on November 1st 1831 into a provisional government, the power being really in the hands of the three commissions which had survived, namely that of finance, that of justice and home affairs, and that of public worship and education, the two latter forming one ministry until 1839. But the imperial lieutenant, the commander-in-chief Paskiewicz, ruled these commissions and all the administration. This «prince of Erivan and Warsaw», during the twenty-four years (1832-1856) in which he wielded the supreme power, systematically crushed every liberal aspiration, put a gag on the press and on education and transformed the public schools into real penitentiaries subjected to military discipline, with a generous application of corporal punishment. At the same time instruction began to be given in Russian. In order to secure rapid russification of the country, a department of Public Instruction was created in Warsaw in 1839, under the direct control of the minister Uwarow of St. Petersburg. Uwarow invented the motto, which ever since was used by the Russian reactionaries : « Orthodoxy, Autocracy and Nationalism. » Efforts were made to divert the energies of students into the channel of the practical sciences and away from the «humanities» or literature, and the number of pupils in secondary schools was limited, only the sons of nobles or functionaries being admitted. In order to remove the young girls from the influence of their Polish homes, the «Institute of Mary» was created. Primary education was completely disorganized; there was no obligatory attendance, nor were the people forced to keep up the schools.



In those which remained open, Russian teachers were introduced, who taught in Russian. The youth were not permitted to go abroad for their studies and even aged persons were only with great difficulty allowed to leave the country. The frontier was shut against books on social questions; it was forbidden to print the great Polish classics; the names of the greatest writers, Mickiewicz, Krasinski, Lelewel, who won the admiration of the nation, were put on the index : it was counted a crime to pronounce them. Out of the confiscated lands, Paskiewicz formed a series of entailed estates for Russians (132 up to 1836, 265 more up to 1870). He established near Modlin a colony of Russian peasants, encouraged mixed marriages, of which the children became necessarily Orthodox. In view of a unification with Russia, the Russian system of weights and measures was introduced into Poland. The authorities of the land were given Russian titles and designations. The supreme Court was changed into departments of the Senate, the old voyvodies (palatinates) into governments (1837), which were placed under the direction of the central administration of the empire. In 1840 the Mint was closed, and Russian functionaries who were eager for advancement were put at the head of the reorganized administration; in 1847, to the Polish penal code of 1818 was substituted the Russian, in which exile to Siberia and putting in irons are the commonest penalties. This was how Russia observed the « Organic Statute », its guarantees for the liberty of the subject and of personal property, its liberty of the press, its special protection of Catholics, and so on.

The Lithuanian and Ruthenian regions were subjected to even more rigorous treatment. Notwithstanding the partitions, Lithuania had remained in close union with Poland. The promise, which Alexander I did not keep,

of joining it to Poland, only served to revive, here and there, the desire for a common political life. The repression of Nowosiltzew, with a view to russification, was unable to smother it; a little before the insurrection he had succeeded Czartoryski in the position of curator of public instruction. As soon as news arrived of the revolution which had broken out in Poland, Lithuania, too, rose in arms. The nobility signed the declaration of insurrection at Cytowiany; the peasants were not slow in joining the movement, so that the army of the insurgents soon numbered ten thousand men. The rising in Lithuania met with the same fate as that in Volhynia, Podolia and the Kingdom. After having crushed it, Nicholas created in September 28th 1831, a Commission for the western governments, with a view to destroying utterly their Polish character. For this purpose he promulgated the ukase of the 31st of October 1831, by which all the lesser Lithuanian and Ruthenian nobility who could not furnish their titles of nobility were reduced to the rank of the peasant. On the 21st of November of the same year, 5,000 Polish families from Podolia were exiled to the Caucasus. A similar ukase (18 April 1832) sent to the interior of Russia 40,000 Polish families of the governments of Wilno, Grodno, Bialystok, Witebsk, Mohylew, Kiew and Wolhynia. There were several series of ukases confiscating properties (1832, 1837). The university of Wilno was closed, and the faculty of medicine alone was allowed to subsist until 1841, under the title of medico-surgical Academy. In 1833 the model secondary school of Krzemieniec was russified and transferred to Kiew. The Lithuanian Statute was abolished. The Greek Uniate Church was once more persecuted. The renegade Bishop of Brzesc-Litewski, Siemaszko (1831-1839), strove to bring the Uniates over to the official Orthodox worship. In 1833 the monas-

teries of Basilians were closed, and the famous Abbey of Poczajow, amongst others, was converted into an Orthodox convent («Lawra»). The affairs of the Uniates were entrusted to the administration of the Holy Synod of the Orthodox Church (1837). After the death of the metropolitane, Bulhak, efforts were made to break the opposition of the White-Russian clergy. Any means was good for this object: transportation, the withholding of salaries, imprisonment. Finally Siemaszko, by every means imaginable, forced the heads of the Greek Uniate Church to sign an act of union (akt soborny) with the Orthodox Church (12/24 February 1839). Nicholas ratified the decision of the Holy Synod in this matter, but the best ones among the Orthodox bishops did not conceal their contempt for the «Judas» Siemaszko and, except for some rare cases, the generality of Uniates remained faithful to their Church. Then began an attempt to convert them by force. The Basilian nuns of Minsk were subjected to unheard-of tortures: they were beaten to death, their eyes were put out, they were buried alive. By rods or threats, by transportation to the depths of Russia, the resistance of the peasants was broken. Still, they never succeeded in really ousting the Greek Uniate Church from Lithuania and Ruthenia; many remained faithful in secret. The Roman Catholics were not much better treated. In 1839 all Catholic criminals who consented to apostatize received their pardon. Severe penalties were instituted for converts from Orthodoxy (1840). Church property in Lithuania and Ruthenia was confiscated. About two hundred Catholic monasteries were converted into orthodox monasteries. This exhausted the patience of the extremely conciliating Gregory XVI, who had tried to save his flock by an ill-timed disapprobation of the insurrection, but who now sent in an energetic but

ineffective protestation (1842). The concordat with Pius IX, which was to settle the whole question, remained a dead letter.

#### IV

### Emigration

The political catastrophe of 1831 caused a considerable emigration into France, Belgium and England. The exiles strove to keep alive the intellectual life and love of freedom which were stifled in their own country.

Two different tendencies showed themselves among the Polish emigrants, one conservative, chiefly among those of the nobility, the other radical and democratic. The former, who considered prince Adam Czartoryski as their head, strove to induce the western Powers to intervene in favour of Poland, but they did not omit at the same time to organize scientific studies abroad and to encourage intellectual progress in Poland itself. The others, with the historian. Lelewel at their head, worked hard to awaken the national feeling among the masses in Poland; they counted on fresh insurrections as well as on the aid of civilized nations. The « Zjednoczenie » (Union) Association attempted in vain to unite the two tendencies into a common effort (1838-1846). The extreme radicals decided at the congress of Lyon (1833) to send emissaries to Poland to provoke another insurrection; this movement only succeeded in making new victims and led to fresh disappointment (1833). In 1832 the «Democratic Society» was founded and transferred its central organization to

Poitiers in 1835. Its programme, published in the manifests of the society, was based on the following fundamental points : political independence, emancipation of the peasants and distribution of lands among them. Its motto was : « For Poland, through democracy, and through Poland, for the world. » A fraction of the «Left» parties of the emigrants created in 1834 the «Young Poland» party, which established a fraternal connection with the «Young Europe» party of Mazzini. From the centralizing circles came advocates of instruction who were full of abnegation, and agitators, like Simon Konarski († 1839) the instigator of the Lithuanian conspiracy (1838) and its martyrs Ehrenberg, Heltmann, etc. From 1838 onward, the preparation for a new armed struggle was made with renewed ardour. The democrats recognized Louis Mieroslawski as their leader and planned a simultaneous rising in the fractions of Poland, which was to break out in February 1846. The scheme fell through. The year 1848 saw the rise of new hopes. There was an unsuccessful struggle of Polish patriots and populists against the Prussian and Austrian governments. The movement tried to help, not only the Polish cause, but also the cause of freedom abroad, in Germany, in Hungary (Dembinski, Bem), in Italy (Chrzanowski, Mieroslawski). The reaction which followed upon the «Springtime of peoples» put an end to the efforts of that generation towards emancipation, but the light kindled threw its deathless rays into the future, over generations imbued with the ideals of the forerunners among the emigrants, the harbingers of freedom. The prophetic poems of Mickiewicz, of Slowacki, of Krasinski, the inspired music of Chopin, the historical works of Lelewel, continued to do their work. They fashioned the national ideal, not only among the émigrés, but throughout Poland, and they gave



the long-suffering Polish soul the temper which will enable it to bear all the trials that destiny may yet hold in reserve for it.

The effect of all these sanguinary contests was to intensify in the people the desire for self-government. Committees and associations for defence grew up spontaneously everywhere. The corporations and the merchants decided henceforth to recognize no religious differences; the Jews were treated as equals before the law. On the 25th of February, the Agricultural Society resolved to make the peasants owners of their land by a system of repurchase. In the meantime the authorities at St. Petersburg strove to obliterate the painful memories of the repression.

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## V

### The Insurrection of 1863-1864

The Crimean war (1853-1856) was brought to a close without having occasioned any disturbances in Poland. At the peace negotiations France and England could not come to an agreement on the principles of the Polish question. When England, at the Congress of Paris, reminded Russia of the guarantees which had been given at the Congress of Vienna, the answer given was that the new emperor Alexander II « intended to restore to the Poles all the rights to which allusion was made ». And evidently the successor of Nicholas seemed to understand the necessity, after the defeat he had undergone, of gaining the hearts of the Poles. During his stay in Warsaw in 1856,

he spoke of forgetting the past and of a happy future for Poland in union with Russia on the same lines as the union of Finland. But far from disclaiming his father's principles, he praised his conduct and to the ardent aspirations of the Poles he opposed the celebrated and freezing reply : « Now, gentlemen, no dreams, please. » A part of those who had been condemned in 1833 were pardoned, but their confiscated properties were not restored, and no further mention was made of granting to the Poles the treatment « similar to that of Finland » which had been promised them. The country only gained two really useful things : the Academy of Medicine (1857) and the « Agricultural Society » (1857). The latter, energetically directed by count Andrew Zamoyski, became in reality a sort of Ministry of Agriculture in which were united representatives of all classes of society. With the authorization of the government they discussed, amongst other things, the measures which were to be taken for the emancipation of the peasants and the redemption of their obligations to statute-labour. At this juncture an echo reached the Vistula of the Franco-Italian victories over Austria and of the Garibaldian movement. Prince Gortschakow had succeeded Paskiewicz, but Polish reform remained as much as ever in the domain of mere possibilities. Gortschakow proved incapable of giving any definite direction to Russian policy. He inclined now to lenity, and now to unreasoning severity and repression. The population began to fret under his capricious action, and agitation broke out in Poland, in Lithuania and at Warsaw (1860). It was proposed to commemorate the thirtieth anniversary of the insurrection of 1830 (Nov. 29th 1860) and that of the battle of Grochow (25th and 27th February 1861). The latter was dispersed by the Russian troops by a fusillade which made five victims.

The ukase of March 26th 1861 granted to the Kingdom a separate Council of State, the autonomy of the governments, districts and towns, the direction of public worship and of education, and finally a reform of the University system. Marquis Alexander Wielopolski, who was known for his anti-German and anti-Austrian ideas, a sincere partisan of a loyal entente with Russia, was made director of Public worship. But, on the other hand, the government closed the Agricultural Society which had grouped round it the moderate patriots, surnamed the « Whites », who were opposed to all armed rising. The Marquis, unable to get on with the imperial lieutenants, sent in his resignation. Called to Petersburg, he used all his political ability in trying to get back for Poland its complete autonomy. He came back to Warsaw during the summer of 1862, with the new Imperial Lieutenant, the grand duke Constantine, and charged with full powers. Created vice-president of the Administration Council, which meant head of the civil government, he set to work immediately to accomplish his projects : equal rights for the Jews and the reform of the educational system. He founded the School for Higher Studies (Szkola Glowna). But notwithstanding all this, Wielopolski was unable to win the confidence of the nation. Of a dictatorial character, believing only in himself, bringing with him ready-made the decisions he had taken in Petersburg, though he was working for the country, he did not trouble to work in harmony with it. In consequence the effervescence continued instead of going down. The « whites » were furious with the dissolution of the Agricultural Society and loudly called for the union of Lithuania with the autonomous Kingdom. Whites and Reds vied with each other in boasting of their connection with the great emigration. The Reds were victorious in gaining popular

favour. Wielopolski and the grand duke were both the object of criminal attempts. The Marquis hoped to «open the abcess» by ordering the recruiting of the young conspirators without the usual «drawing of lots» (January 15th 1863), but this only hastened the outbreak of the insurrection (January 22nd). Six to eight thousand ill-armed insurgents, without military training, commanded by secret committees and dictators (Mieroslawski, Langiewicz) held out against 160.000 Russians for sixteen months. They performed prodigies of valour, but could not escape defeat. The «national government» did its best to raise patriotic taxes, it established a connection with the Cabinets of Western Europe by means of prince Ladislas Czartoryski (son of Adam Czartoryski). Finally (22nd January 1863), it proclaimed the emancipation of the peasants. But this proof of common sense and generosity, which anticipated the intended action of Alexander II, did not revolutionize the masses. On August 5th 1864, the last remaining members of the national government, with Romuald Traugutt at their head, were hanged on the glacis of the citadel of Warsaw. Wielopolski and the grand duke Constantine had already left Warsaw and had been replaced by the imperial Lieutenant Berg. At Wilno, after the final repression of the Lithuanian movement, Mouravief, of bloody memory, was sent to represent Russia. Under the pretext of checking the danger of insurrection which, he said, still existed, he hunted down without mercy priest, noble and peasant, striking at random guilty and innocent alike, burning, confiscating, laying whole villages under contribution, transporting the inhabitants to Siberia as convicts, imprisoning and hanging people by hundreds «to serve as an example to the rest». The nation has branded him with the name of the «hanging»

governor: Russia has erected a statue to him in Wilno, where he had exercised his oppressions and cruelties.

Public opinion in constitutional Europe, whether of the Catholics under the inspiration of Montalembert, or of the liberals, had stood by and looked at this desperate struggle with feelings of sincere compassion, but without an attempt to give active help. It was Napoleon III, the recognized champion of the principle of nationalities, who showed the greatest interest in the rising. He was in direct communication with prince Czartoryski. He headed a diplomatic intervention, into which he had dragged England (J. Russell) and Austria. The three powers presented each a memorandum to Alexander II (April 10th 1863), asking for the restitution to Poland of its national rights which had been trampled upon. But the chancellor Gorczakow had anticipated this move. In a convention signed with the Prussian ambassador Alvensleben (April 8th 1863), he had obtained from William I the promise of his active collaboration in the suppression of any revolutionary movement, and the authorization to pursue the insurgents even into Prussian territory. This convention did not prevent Bismarck from secretly encouraging the Poles in order to obtain from Russia, in the midst of the troubles thus provoked, territorial concessions to the west of the rivers Prosna, Vistula, Narew and Niemen; this eastern extension of the Prussian frontier had already been planned by general Knessebeck. Prussia had vainly tried to obtain it in 1831 and in 1861.

Gorczakow, relying upon Bismarck's support, allowed the first pressing overtures of the Cabinets to be received, and it was only on April 26th that he inquired what were their suggestions for the settlement of the Polish question. They enumerated six points (17th June) namely: amnesty, restoration of autonomy, exclusive



appointment of Poles to public offices, religious freedom, the use of Polish in the administration, law-courts and the schools, and lastly a regular system of enlistment. But Napoleon seemed to be the only one who was ready to support these claims by armed force. Austria made her decision dependent on that of England; England contented herself with protesting and took no action. At the instigation of Bismarck, Gorczakow replied : « Let the insurgents first lay down their arms, and then the three co-partitioning States will settle the Polish question between them. » The solidarity of the western Cabinets broke down. The Russian chancellor put an end to the discussion by a haughty note (Sept. 7th 1863), in which he protested against foreign intervention in any form, and threw the responsibility of the insurrection which was still active, on the shoulders of its western sympathizers.

## VI

### Attempts at russification

The whole of Russia (except Herzen), applauded the success of Mouravief and Gorczakow and gave the reins to its hatred of Poland. The standard-bearer of this movement was the journalist Katkow, a former liberal who had become an out and out reactionary and nationalist. Free scope was given to Russian vengeance, especially after the defeat of Austria (1866) and of France (1870) by Prussia, and since the western Slavs (the Czechs) had joined hands with eastern Pan Slavism (Congress of

Moscow, 1867). The assurances given on the intervention of the western Powers were soon forgotten at Petersburg; forgotten also Alexander's promise, in a note of Sept. 7th 1863, to respect the integrity of Poland within the limits fixed by the Congress of Vienna in 1815. Two special commissions, that of Organization (1864-1871) and that of the affairs of the Kingdom of Poland (1864-1881), both under the watchful eye of Nicholas Milioutine, set to work to systematically disorganize Polish life in the Kingdom of Poland and to stifle it completely in Lithuania. The emancipation of the peasants, which the Polish nation had so long desired, and which the last insurgent government had tried to accomplish, was now effected by the Russian government, which used this reform as a means to attach to itself the country people, to erect a barrier between the cottage and the castle, and to build up on this social hostility and misunderstanding the firm domination of Russia in Poland. It was in this spirit that Milioutine put into execution the ukase of 19th February (2nd March) 1864. Artificially and with the aid of special legislation, the rural classes were completely isolated from the rest. The lands of the peasants were mixed up with those of the great landlords on what was called the *chess-board system*. The estate of the nobility remained encumbered with servitudes which could not be liquidated without the unanimous consent of the peasant community, and finally the peasants were given official « protectors » in the form of commissaries whose special task was to keep alive discord. The successors of Milioutine, when Russia had satisfied her thirst for reprisals, no longer troubled to « governmentalize » the peasant; they directed their efforts to destroying the rural autonomy and to ruining elementary education. From 1867 onward the russifying action is pursued without check or restraint

and aims at nothing less than the destruction of Polish social life and Polish culture.

To efface the last vestiges of anything particularly Polish in the administration and the law, Russia abolished, in 1867, the Administrative Council, the Commission of Finance and Home Affairs and the secretaries of State, and the administration of the country was made directly dependent on Petersburg. The Commission of public Worship and Education was replaced by the Direction of the Educational circle of Warsaw. Finally, the Commission of Justice was abolished (1876), and the general laws of Russian procedure were extended to the Kingdom, but without juries, without the important Councils of Barristers, without elected Justices of the peace. In 1874 the lieutenant was replaced by a governor-general. All the districts of ancient Poland were refused all local autonomy in the country. The Kingdom of Poland was even deprived of autonomous town-administration. The Uniates, who still remained in the Kingdom (on the left bank of the Bug), were incorporated forcibly with the State Church (1875). The scenes of the great Lithuanian persecution of 1839 were renewed. Whole villages were subjected to whippings and scourgings; men, women, old men, children had to bear sometimes as many as four hundred strokes; to reduce recalcitrants, recourse was had to cold, hunger, imprisonment and exile; at Pratulin the army had to be called in and thirteen people were killed; even at this distance of time one cannot but shudder with horror at the tortures and refinement of cruelty of that epoch. And yet the people endured these trials with unshaken firmness. The Uniates who had become orthodox «pro forma», up to 1905, that is, until the promulgation of the ukase of toleration, led an underground life and practised their worship in secret, like the first Christians.

The government did not spare the Catholic religion either. By virtue of the ukase of 1864, ecclesiastical property and foundations were confiscated to the Treasury. Nearly all the convents and monasteries were closed. Only a few monks or nuns were allowed to remain and await death there. Without consulting the Roman curia the administration of the Catholic Church in the Kingdom was put under the authority of the ecclesiastical College of Petersburg. The Bishops of Plock and Sejny, who had protested against this measure, were exiled to Siberia; the clergy were hindered at every step in the discharge of their sacerdotal office, they were forbidden to hold direct communication with the Holy See, they were surrounded with spies; the ecclesiastical Academy of Warsaw was suppressed in 1868. In Lithuania and Ruthenia the pressure exerted on the Church was still more implacable. According to the theory of Mouravief these lands were Russian and Orthodox; it was therefore necessary to obliterate there all vestiges of Polonism or of Catholicism; processions were forbidden; the churches, the wayside crosses even, could not be restored without special permission. Churches were shut on the flimsiest pretext, or without any pretext, as we see in the case of Kroze in Lithuania (Nov. 10th 1893), where the incident led to a bloody massacre. Catholic churches were transformed into Orthodox ones; the Russian tongue was introduced into the Catholic ritual. The conversion of an Orthodox person to Catholicism, the administration of sacraments to an « obstinate » Uniate, were visited with severe penalties. Besides, anything that the imperial ukases had omitted or forgotten was diligently supplied by governors, district commissioners, or the police, without any regard for existing laws. Landed proprietors in Lithuania were subjected (1863) to a tax amounting to 10 % of their

income, which was replaced later (1867-1869) by a tax of 5 % falling only on Polish landowners. In 1870 it was given to understand that the tax would cease to be levied when two thirds of the property of the nobility should have passed into non-Polish hands. In 1865, an imperial ukase forbade the Poles to acquire landed property in the nine Lithuano-Ruthenian governments. Twenty years later this prescription was aggravated by the additional prohibition to farm other people's lands, or to mortgage their own. In the land where Mickiewicz was born, the Polish tongue was banished from public life and even from clubs, shops, public gardens, the streets and the concerts. Everything that could seem Polish was hunted out with pitiless rage: songs, costumes, even special ways of harnessing horses. The Poles were excluded from all offices of State, even the meanest posts; they could not keep a station refreshment-room.

The tide of russification, after having submerged Lithuania and the Ruthenian country, extended further west. The Kingdom itself was flooded with a mass of functionaries chosen among the lowest of their caste, men attracted by the hopes of rapid advancement, by privileges, high pay, perquisites, early rights to retired pay, subsidies for the education of their children, and so on. This was how the Russian «minority» was constituted. After a few years of a relatively gentler rule, under the governorship of general Albedynski (1880-1883), his successor Hourko (1883-1894) combated, with the help of the police and imprisonment in the dungeons of the citadel, all social action and the slightest manifestation of national life. Polish was banished, not only from the public offices, but even from private offices, from the railways, waiting rooms and railway carriages. Public notices, names of streets, advertisements, receipts, names



of stations, everything became Russian. The police were all-powerful, any abuse was tolerated, provided it was Russian. Poles, on the contrary, were condemned without trial and exiled by order of the administration. The citadel was constantly crowded with political prisoners, who had been incarcerated by the police or the « ochrana » for the least shadow of « disloyal feeling », or even without any serious motive.

Russians were introduced everywhere, even in the lowest posts of the post-office and the railways. Even street-porters were to be Russian. The curator of the educational circle, Apuchtin (1873-1896), surpassed even Hourko in his zeal for oppression. The minister of education, Dimitri Tolstoï had already (1876) begun to introduce the Russian language into primary schools, in spite of the law of 1864. It became the official teaching language in 1885. The secondary schools had been russified in 1869. In the same year the School of Higher Studies of Warsaw (Polish university) was closed, after seven years of fruitful and deserving work, and it was replaced by a Russian university whose character was purely bureaucratic and whose activity was utterly sterile. Catholic priests were forbidden to give religious instruction in primary schools. Private lessons to a collection of pupils were declared felonious as constituting secret teaching and were punished, without trial, with prison or fine up to 300 roubles. Apuchtin assured that, with such methods, « Polish nurses would soon rock their children to sleep with the accompaniment of Russian lullabies ». The work of Hourko and Apuchtin soon resulted in a rapid increase of the number of the unlettered, and produced a population of a degree of ignorance such as had not been seen for a hundred years, and the inevitable result was an extension of crime and especially

of brigandage. In the heart of the population, especially among the youth of the schools, the policy of Hourko gave birth to hatred and contempt of the government. As a matter of fact, the Russian school never russified a single Pole, even among the peasant class who are to-day even more deeply imbued with national feeling than they were before their emancipation. This was due to the system of national self-defence. Amid untold sufferings and bound hand and foot as it was, the nation none the less continued its work, thus giving signal proof of its indestructibility. Already in the time of Paskiewicz, it had turned its energies in a new direction, that of economic activity. Following the tradition of men like Staszic and Lubecki, the Polish Bank on the one hand, and on the other the first pioneers of industry, like Peter Steinkeller, began to create workshops and to establish the foundations of labour. After 1850, the date of the suppression of the frontier between the Kingdom and the Empire, industry began to take on a great extension in Poland. In spite of obstacles, it not only competed vigorously with the eastern provinces, but even succeeded in creating an ever-increasing market for its products in the very heart of Russia. Concurrently with this economic activity, the generation which has been dubbed « positivist », worked unremittingly at the education of the people, and strove to maintain the level of thought in Poland as high as among the most civilized nations of Europe. Though deprived of Polish schools and universities, the Poles of the Kingdom produced a brilliant literature which includes the glorious names of Sienkiewicz, Prus, Orzeszko and of many other masters. The new social tendencies found many followers among the youth of the nation. The economic evolution gave rise to a workmen's problem and later to socialist organizations. The first date back to

1877. In 1881 the « Proletariat » was founded; towards 1889 the « Union of Polish workers », in 1893 the Polish socialist party, in 1899 the Social Democracy of the Kingdom of Poland and of Lithuania. Other young democrats, grouped under the national league abroad (1886) strove to come to an understanding on the basis of national aims. They put pan-polonism at the head of their programme and consecrated all their energy to the secret teaching of the Polish tongue among the lower classes as well as to the constructing of a political plan which should be as far removed from the folly of insurrection as from a servile abdication. The conservative group, full of conciliation, tried to work in harmony with the government (1894), but the latter repelled the hand that was stretched out to it. The Poles obtained, it is true, though indirectly, the resignation of the governor-general Hourko (1894). Prince Imeretynski, who was appointed in his place, was more conciliating and humane. At the first visit of Nicholas II to Warsaw, in the excitement caused by the fresh hopes raised by the new reign, a warm reception was given to the sovereign, but the advantages obtained were slight : leave to erect in Warsaw a monument to Mickiewicz, a few concessions in the matter of the Polish tongue, and a few liberties in the domain of trade and industry; but the general trend of Russian conditions was not modified.

It was under such difficult conditions that the Kingdom of Poland recovered little by little from the state of despondency into which it had been cast by the repression of the 1863 insurrection. The war with Japan broke out (1904-1905) and in consequence of the reverses in the Extreme East, the whole empire became convinced that the participation of the whole nation in the legislative power was now indispensable, as well as the

securing of the political rights for all. Throughout the empire an intense revolutionary propaganda was going on openly, or in secret; the country was soon covered with illegal associations which called congresses and fomented numerous political strikes.

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## VII

### The last period

Since 1905 Russia is a constitutional State, though its development in this direction has not been considerable, for the battle between autocracy and the «revolution» has given very uncertain results.

The Kingdom of Poland, deprived, in practice, of the freedom of action which the Congress of Vienna had guaranteed on paper, shared with the rest of Russia the upheavals, the hopes and the disappointments of those stormy years. The extremists were for a real working union with the revolted Russian people. The «social democrats» of the Kingdom of Poland and Lithuania made one with their comrades in Russia; as for the Polish socialist party, without forgetting national aims, it incited the proletariat to separate revolutionary acts. It was chiefly under the influence of the advanced parties that the strike in the higher and secondary schools of Poland took place, and it was fostered by the general public in the groundless hope that this would be the means of obtaining official Polish teaching. The moderate parties looked upon it as dangerous to link the lot of Poland to

a very doubtful success of the maximalists in Russia, and they profited by the relaxation in the oppression to found societies and institutions which might forward progress in economic, social or politic life, and they gave a national-democratic or a progressive character to these institutions.

Independently of the different tendencies of parties, nearly all Polish society clamoured for a wider autonomy in the Kingdom than that which Galicia enjoyed. And it seemed, indeed, that «revolution» would secure these ends. The whole of liberal Russia proclaimed in the press and in the congresses the justice of the principle of autonomy. The only question seemed to be as to the method of its application : would the Duma grant to the Kingdom its own particular Diet, or should the new constitution be the work of a Polish Constituent assembly? That was the question.

At the first elections to the Duma the national democrats were victorious everywhere. But the Polish question did not come up for discussion, as the government dissolved the Duma. For the new elections the national democrats joined forces with the «conservatives» and the minority of the progressists (Polish progressist party). The Polish Club presented on April 27th 1907 a project of autonomy for the Kingdom. This was the high-water mark in the influence of Polish politics in «regenerated» Russia. The Polish Club sometimes decided which way the majority went and it tried to profit by this favourable state of things.

But all these hopes were disappointed by the *coup d'Etat* of June 1907. The Duma which had been representative of a nation, became the representative of certain classes and a passive instrument in the hand of the reactionaries. The number of seats for the Kingdom was reduced from 36 to 12. Thus it was that official Russia



chastised the Poles for their independent tendencies and for their very modest collaboration in the work of « revolution ».

The Russian nation accepted with indifference its defeat and ours. Soon even, not only the government, but the Russian people themselves turned against the Poles. The Polish Club lost the sympathy of the radicals (the Cadets), of the Labour and Socialist parties, by refusing to sign the protestation of Viborg after the dissolution of the first Duma, and by criticizing the projects of agrarian reform of the Cadets. The Poles, constitutionalists by tradition, by their ideas and their interests were accused of being « obscurantists » by that very « progressive » Russia which had shown itself incapable of creating a real constitution. The question of autonomy was now shelved. The reaction lifted up its head again and drew in its wake the uncertain masses, sowing the seeds of hatred of the Poles, of the Jews, of the Finns, of all « foreign races ». The Jews were driven from the empire, either by pogroms, or by administrative measures. They crowded into the Kingdom of Poland where their invasion caused a grave crisis of nationalities. Whereas in 1817 they did not form more than 7,8 % of the population, they now constituted 14,5 %. Under the influence of these new-comers, known as « Litwaks », a well-defined movement towards national separatism began to take shape among the Jews of the Kingdom. Moreover these « Litwaks » had brought with them the Russian language and a superficial Russian culture; they affected to despise their Polish surroundings and acted as rusifying helpers and « agents provocateurs », sowing discord between the peaceful Pole and his Jewish fellow-citizen. Meanwhile the Russian government was preparing new disappointments for Poland.

Stolypine's government (1907-1911) acted in harmony with « true Russians », that is to say the monarchists and nationalists, and applied inflexibly to the whole empire the draconic principle : « Order first, reforms after. » The Poles were treated as internal foes, and russification was taken up again with a vigour hitherto unknown. The Polish associations were dissolved and amongst them the two principal centres of national life : the Sokol (gymnastic society) and the « Macierz szkolna » (Society for elementary education) (Dec. 14th 1907). The latter was so necessary that it had succeeded, during the eighteen months of its brief existence, in establishing 800 elementary schools attended by 63.000 children, a popular university and classes for adults in thirteen towns of the province. It conducted 400 asylums and had opened 600 free libraries or reading-rooms. The subscriptions for the work of the society had reached 1.500.000 roubles.

The ukase of toleration had allowed more than 200.000 so-called « Orthodox » to go back to the Uniate Church. To save the « threatened » life of the Orthodox Church, the old project of the « Chelm government » was disinterred. The Chelm government was formed of a part of the governments of Lublin and Siedlce whose population was partly Ruthenian, but in great majority Uniate in faith, many of them being « obstinate » or secret believers. This project, so often rejected by numerous governors-general of Warsaw, was passed by the Duma after the assassination of Stolypine (June 23rd 1912)<sup>1</sup>. The government of Chelm, delivered from the so-called

<sup>1</sup> By ukase of March 30th 1915, the newly constituted government of Chelm had been separated from the Kingdom of Poland in the teeth of the conditions of the Congress of Vienna regarding the frontiers of the Kingdom.

Polish yoke, was subjected to laws of exception and an intense russification. This new invention of the administration was represented as a necessary step towards municipal and rural autonomy in the Kingdom. Nevertheless, the government allowed the « essentially Russian » Council of Empire to sink the moderate plan of municipal autonomy which it had evolved and which the Duma had considerably modified<sup>1</sup>. The Vienna-Warsaw railway was bought up by the State and thousands of Russian employees were put in the place of Poles. In Lithuania the Rural Bank was quietly buying up Polish estates and distributing them to Orthodox peasants.

To resume : the only Polish conquest of the revolutionary period has been private secondary schools which prospered, thanks to public generosity, but whose existence was perpetually menaced and whose action was limited by circulars from the Educational Section of Warsaw. In addition, certain economic associations, like the Central Agricultural Society (1908), or means of culture, like the Scientific Society of Warsaw (1907) were called into existence.

The war of 1914 has found the Kingdom undismayed by the blows which Russian policy has been showering upon it. The nation is still animated by a steadfast and unshaken resolution and by the firmest confidence in the invincible strength of the Polish soul.

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<sup>1</sup> Ratified on the strength of art. 87 of the Russian Fundamental Laws during the present war (Ukase of March 30th 1915).



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